

PSM

**ACTION
GAME
SPECIAL!**

WORLD'S
**BEST-
SELLING**
PS2 MAG!

Only MUYTA 3

1st HANDS-ON!

PLUS:

Hitman 3 • Rise to Honor
Neo Contra • Rainbow Six 3
Nightshade • & More!

GRAN TURISMO 4
45 NEW SCREENS!

NEW HORROR

Why *Silent Hill 4* &
Siren will TERRIFY you!

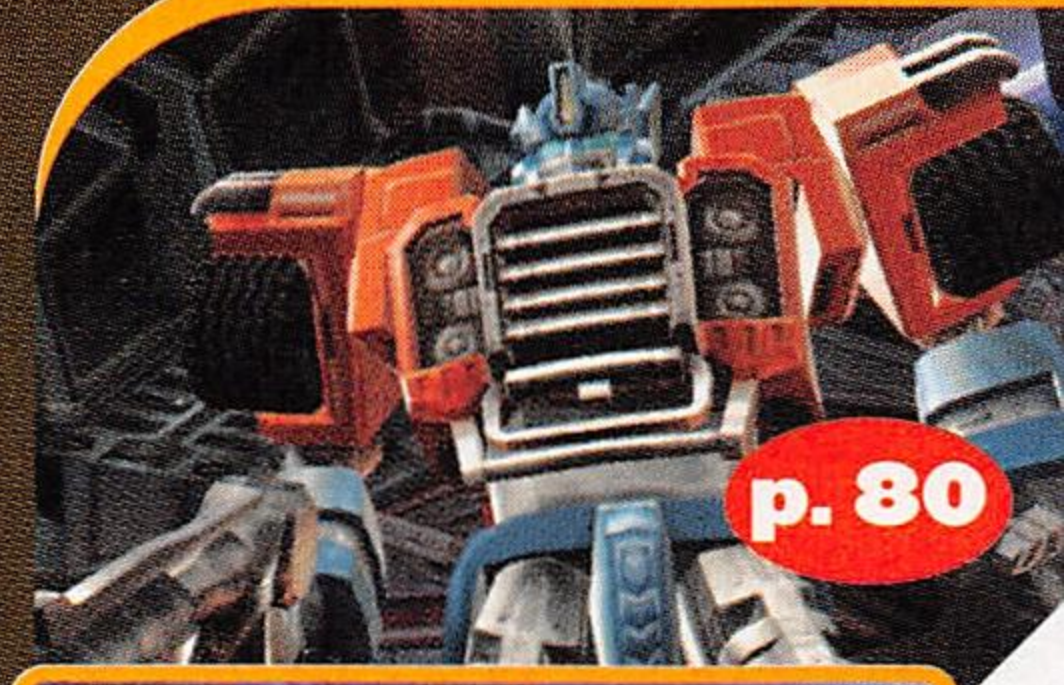


**PSP
EXCLUSIVE
NEW INFO!**



STREET FIGHTER p. 36

REVIEWED: EA's newest franchise scores big!



TRANSFORMERS ARMADA p. 80

HOT SCREENS of crazy giant robot action!



Suikoden IV p. 50

REVEALED: The next classic Konami RPG!

PLUS:

Ghost Recon JS •
Nightmare Before
Christmas • Champions
of Noroeth • B-Type Final

ALL-GIRL WRESTLING!



YEEEEOWWW!

A man, Kit Yun, is walking towards the camera on a wet, reflective street at night. He is wearing a black leather jacket over a red shirt and dark trousers. The background is a dimly lit street with various signs, including one that says "安東尼" (Anthony) in red characters. The wet pavement reflects the ambient light, creating a moody atmosphere.

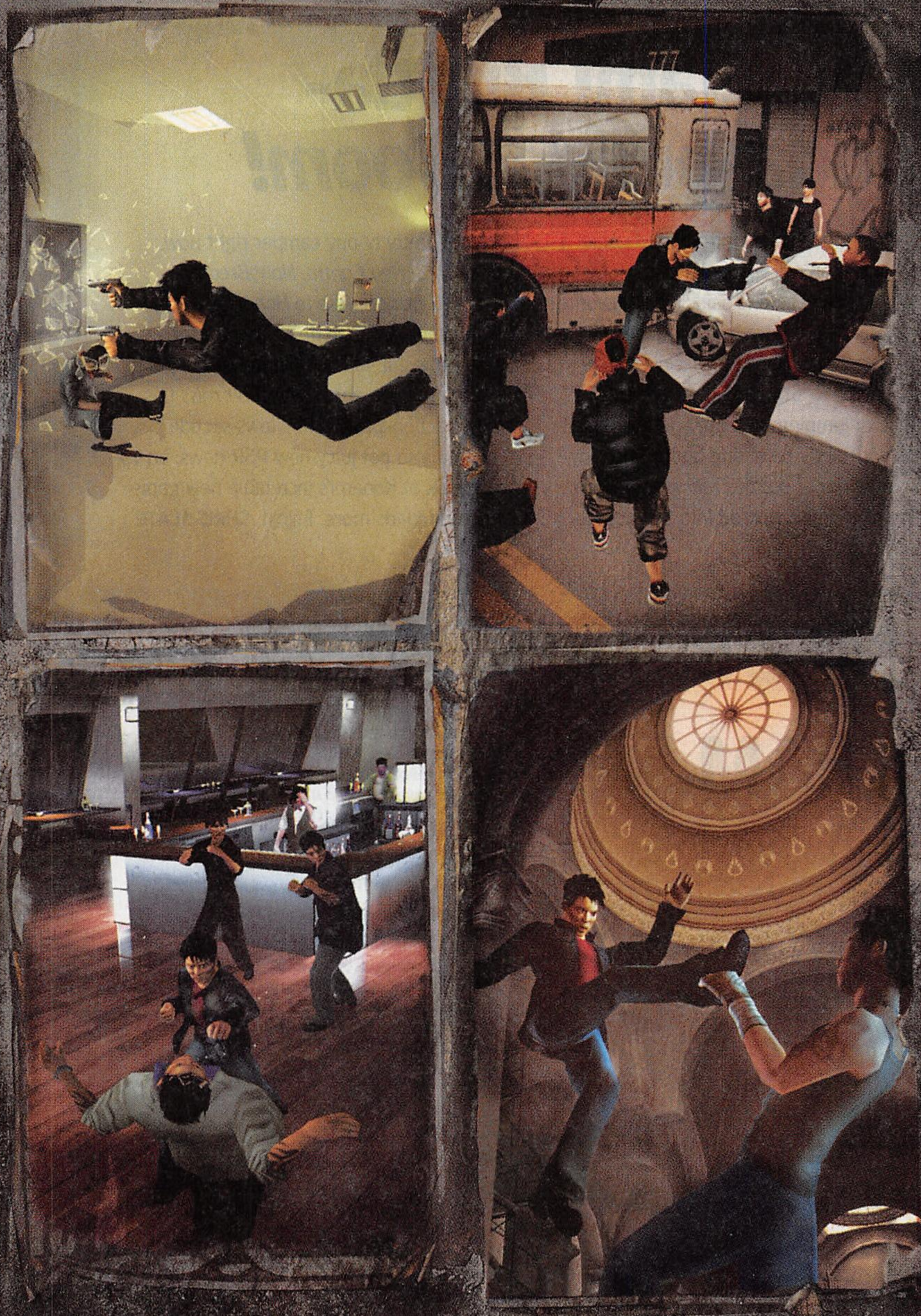
For Kit Yun, the
only way out of the
Hong Kong underworld
is to go back in.



Violence

www.us.playstation.com "Rise to Honor" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ©2004 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

JET LI RISE TO HONOR 義氣



A dying man's last wish. An undercover cop who's running out of time. Jet Li is Kit Yun in Rise to Honor, the story of a cop sworn to fulfill his duty, yet bound by a promise to a powerful crime lord. Now Kit must enter a shadowy world where, to preserve his honor, he'll have to risk his life. But as his enemies will soon learn, sometimes the one who is most honorable...is also the most deadly.

PlayStation®2



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN MINE.

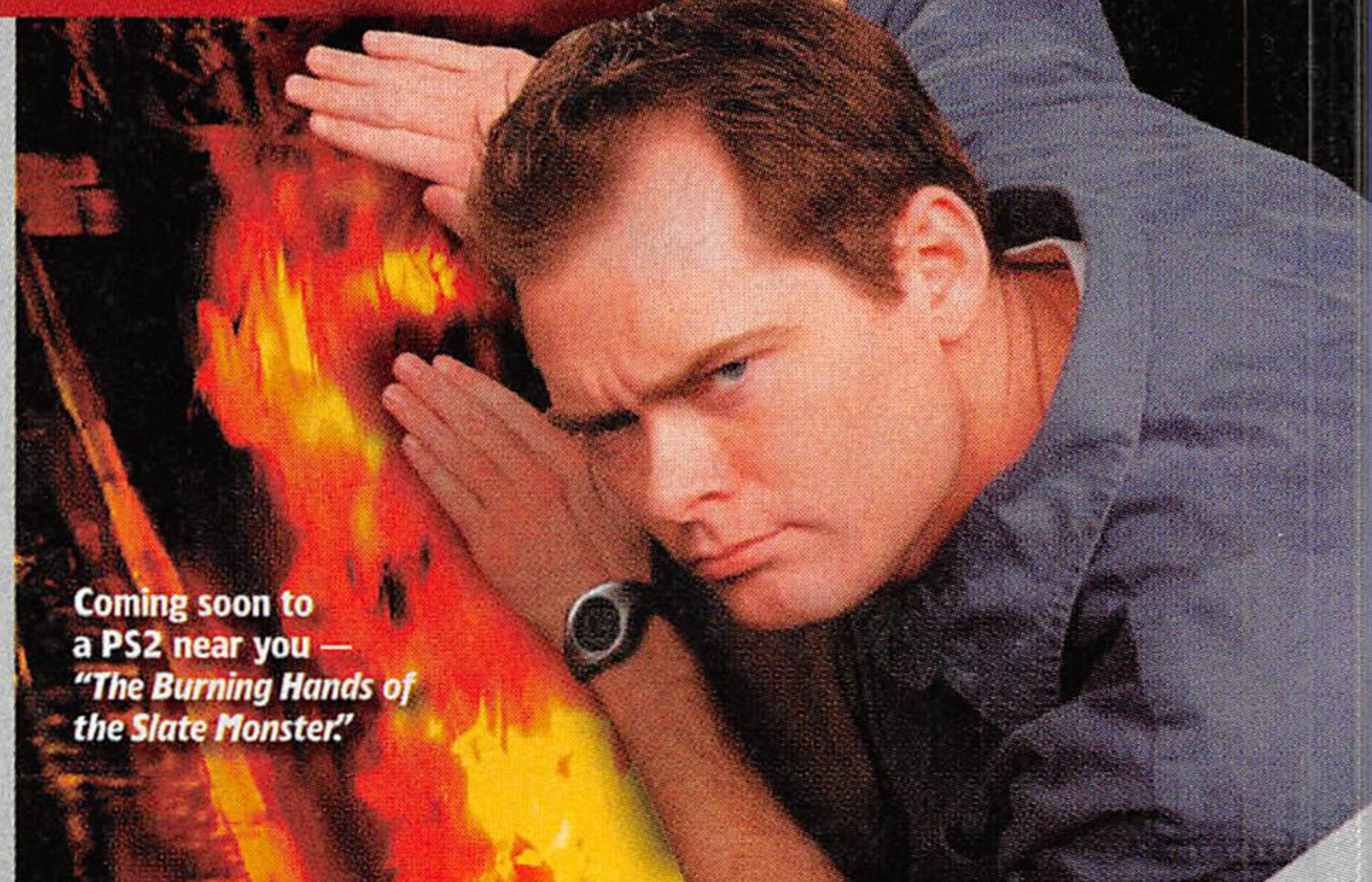
EDITOR'S LETTER

Pow! Blam! Budda-budda-budda! Boom!

If I had to pick a favorite type of game — like, if an evil space dinosaur put a gun to my head and said “pick a favorite or DIE!” — I’d have to go with action games. I love having my reflexes challenged, having to string together a tricky sequence of jumping, slashing and shooting. I need to constantly be hitting buttons. I enjoy having to work out puzzles and strategy, too, but they have to be worked into fast action.

So, I’m a pretty happy camper right now. *Onimusha 3*, *Neo Contra*, *NanoBreaker*, *Hitman: Contracts*, *Rise to Honor* — 2004 is shaping up to be an amazing year for action games! If you’re a big fan of the genre like me, then you absolutely *can’t miss* this month’s action-packed Previews section.

We’ve also got juicy new PSP news, an in-depth look at Konami’s incredible new game lineup and loads more. Enjoy! **CHRIS SLATE**



Coming soon to a PS2 near you — “The Burning Hands of the Slate Monster!”

CHRIS SLATE Editor-In-Chief

LIKES: Action/adventure games, platformers, arcade racers

HOBBIES: Comics, hoops, DVDs, movies, anime, drawing, iPod

Your favorite action hero?

That’s easy — me! Not to toot my own horn, but I did kick major ass in “The Burning Hands of the Slate Monster.” What? Fake movies don’t count?

MEET the TEAM

Ever wonder what a crack team of videogame journalists looks like? ...Aw, c’mon folks, just work with us a little, here...



STEPHEN FROST
SENIOR EDITOR

LIKES: Fighters, Lovers
HOBBIES: DVD collecting

Your favorite action hero?
You can’t beat Pauly Shore. The intense action sequences in the smash hit, *Bio Dome*, took over five years to plan.



RANDY NELSON
REVIEWS EDITOR

LIKES: Platformers, racers
HOBBIES: Comics & Anime

Your favorite action hero?
I’ve always liked Arnold Schwarzenegger, the famous Italian actor who made such films as *Il Torminato*.



ERIC BRATCHER
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

LIKES: RPGs, Weird Imports
HOBBIES: Real estate, Baby!

Your favorite action hero?
Nothing beats Pig Iron, the true star of *The Amazing Zoo Crew*. He was not only strong, but very clean, too.



BILL DONOHUE
MANAGING EDITOR

LIKES: polish-pope.com
HOBBIES: Selling CDs!

Your favorite action hero?
Me! I’ve defended the world from evil dinosaurs for years! Seen any of ‘em around lately? Damn, I’m good!



DAN FITZPATRICK
ART DIRECTOR

LIKES: Old records
HOBBIES: Singing along

Your favorite action hero?
Woody Guthrie. Man, that guy really knew how to jump a freight train! Talk about world class hoboes!



GARY LIEW
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR

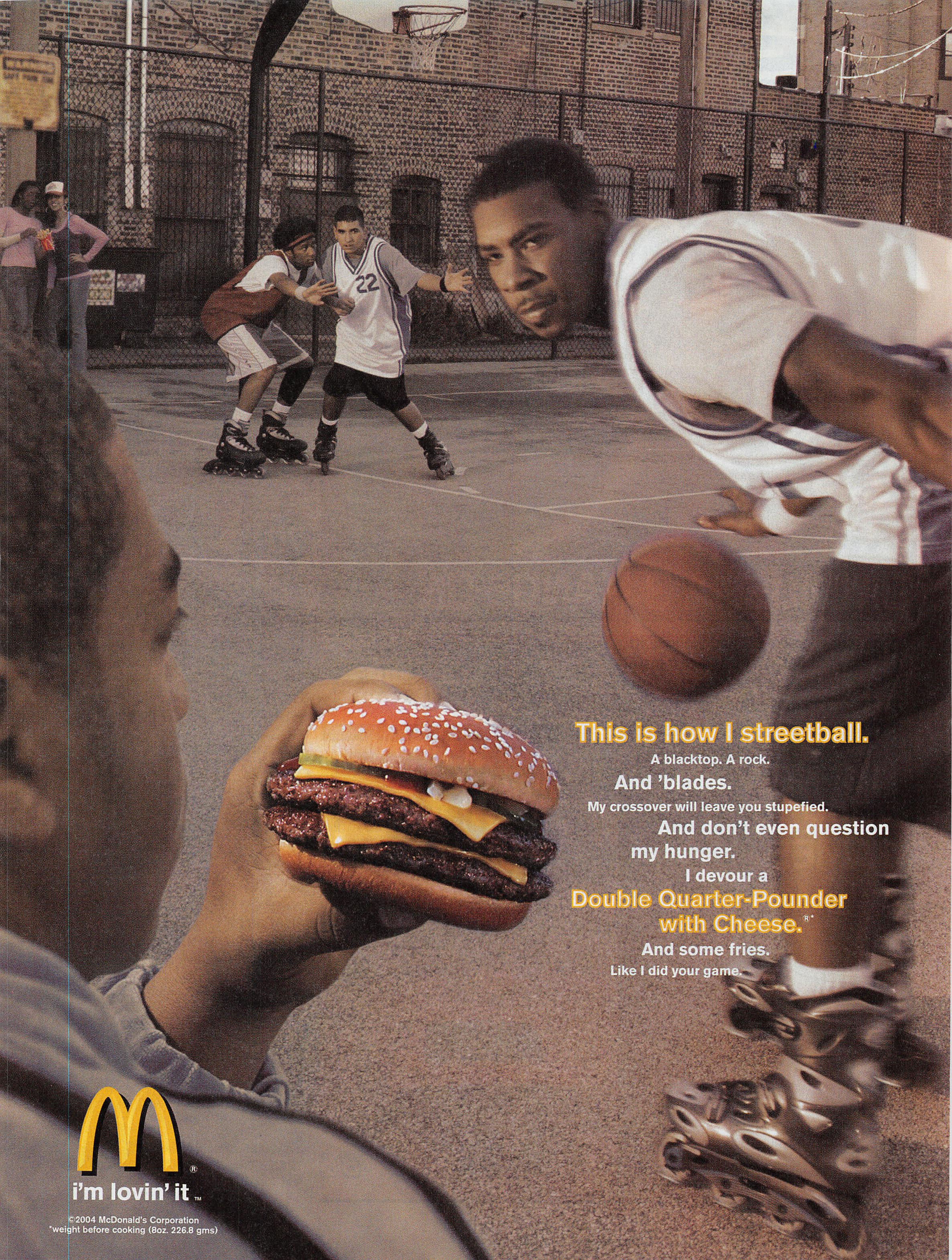
LIKES: Green cars
HOBBIES: Green tea

Your favorite action hero?
My favorite action is when I am gardening, but you don’t have to be calling me a hero, even though I can rake!

ON THE COVER

Capcom knows a little something about making great action games (see *Street Fighter*, *Mega Man*, *Devil May Cry*, and about a hundred others). Can you expect *Onimusha 3* to kick your ass with insane, over-the-top action? Oh, hell yeah!





This is how I streetball.

A blacktop. A rock.

And 'blades.

My crossover will leave you stupefied.

**And don't even question
my hunger.**

I devour a
**Double Quarter-Pounder
with Cheese.^{®*}**

And some fries.

Like I did your game.



i'm lovin' it[™]

©2004 McDonald's Corporation
*weight before cooking (8oz. 226.8 gms)

54



ONIMUSHA 3 HANDS-ON

We've played it and we love it! Find out why this latest installment blows the doors off all the others — and most other action games!

<< THIS COULD BE THE EPIC ACTION/ADVENTURE TITLE OF THE YEAR! >>

THE NEW HORROR GAMES

SILENT HILL 4 and **SIREN** are crazy-creepy in ways you'd never expect!

48

73

MAXIMUM GRAN TURISMO 4

45 breathtaking new screens will really get your motor running!

66



66

FEATURED PREVIEWS

82



HITMAN: CONTRACTS

Get ready to leave your morals at the door and bust in with two guns blazing!

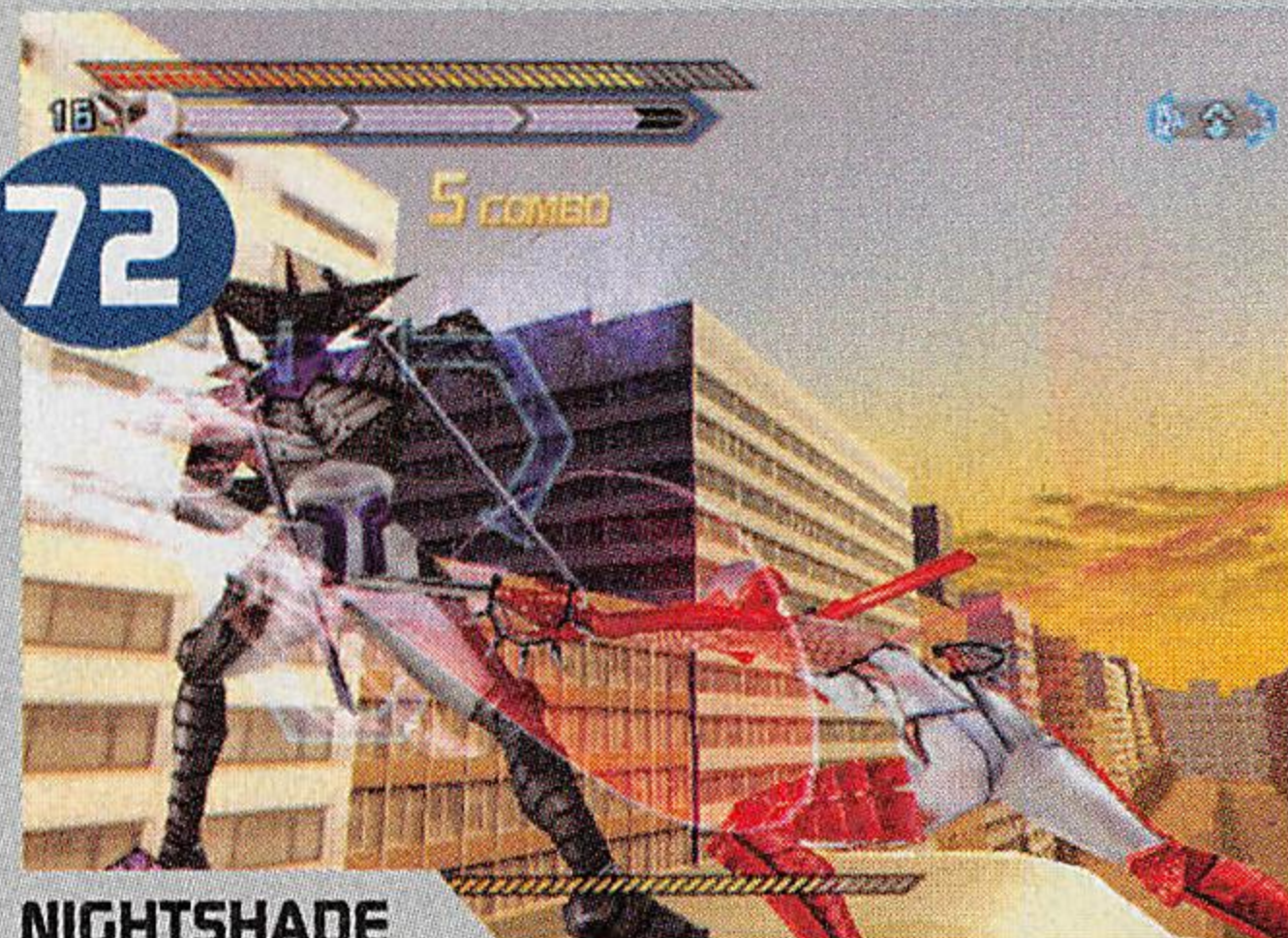
70



NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Can Tim Burton's spooky animated movie become... gasp! ...an action game?

72



NIGHTSHADE

Sega's sexy *Shinobi* sequel star knows how to dress for success!

80



TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

Get this: there are robots that can turn into cars! Yeah, cars! And other stuff, too!

CONTENTS

FEATURES

KONAMI'S CREATORS SPEAK

They've produced some of the best games of all-time. We get 'em to spill their secret plans for 2004!

(HINT: Expect grappling beauties to make a big splash!)



44

MONITOR

Your inside look at this month's hot topics, gear, and games

TOP STORY

8



Konami's amazing new lineup!

CHECKPOINT

14

Your one-stop spot for cool games, movies and gear that's coming your way

REVIEWS

The world's most accurate, in-depth game reviews

GAME OF THE MONTH:

Champions Of Norrath 24
Buy this game. Buy this game.

AIRFORCE DELTA STRIKE	40
CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH	24
CULDCEPT	40
FALLOUT: BOS	28
GHOST RECON: JS	32
HARDWARE REVIEWS	41
NFL STREET	36
R-TYPE FINAL	37
RISE TO HONOR	26
STAR TREK: SU	38
WINNING ELEVEN 7 INTL.	30
WORLD POOL 2004	38
WRATH UNLEASHED	39

PREVIEWS

Your first look at the hottest new PlayStation 2 games

CALL OF DUTY	78
DDR EXTREME	79
FIGHT NIGHT 2004	80
GRAN TURISMO 4	66
HITMAN: CONTRACTS	82
MTX: MOTOTRAX	82
NIGHTMARE BC	70
NIGHTSHADE	72
PITFALL HARRY	79
RAINBOW SIX 3	64
SEVEN SAMURAI 20XX	74
SCOOBY DOO: MAYHEM	82
SIREN	73
TRANSFORMERS ARMADA	80
VAN HELSING	78

HOW TO

Tips, guides, and cheats that will make you a winner

CHAMPS OF NORRATH	84
CULDCEPT	88
BATMAN: ROST	89
DRAGONBALL-Z 2	87
FINAL FANTASY X-2	87
FUGITIVE HUNTER	89
I-NINJA	87
PRINCE OF PERSIA	87
PSM CHALLENGE	89
TEENAGE TURTLES	89
TONY HAWK'S UG	89

<< THE PSP NOW HAS DIGITAL DIRECTION BUTTONS AROUND THE ANALOG STICK... >> pg. 10



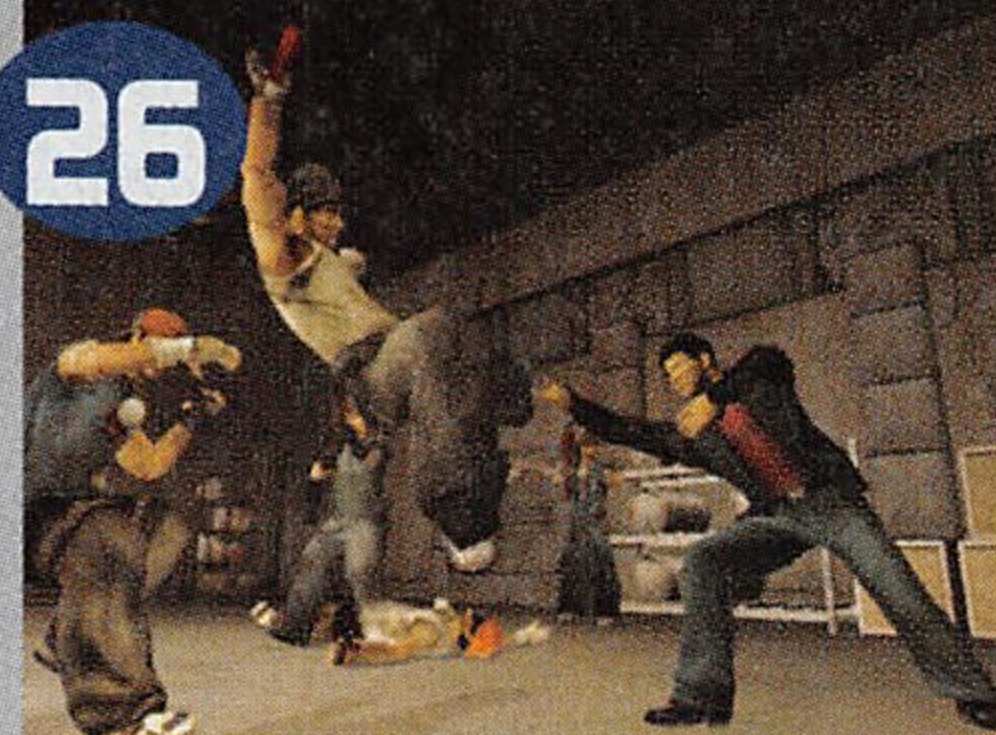
24

CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH

Sony and Snowblind combine to bring you the most graphically gorgeous action/RPG ever! But rest assured; there's a lot more to this title than just eye candy...

PSM
GAME
OF THE
MONTH

FEATURED REVIEWS



26

▲ **RISE TO HONOR** "No, no, no, Antoine! First leap, then lunge!"



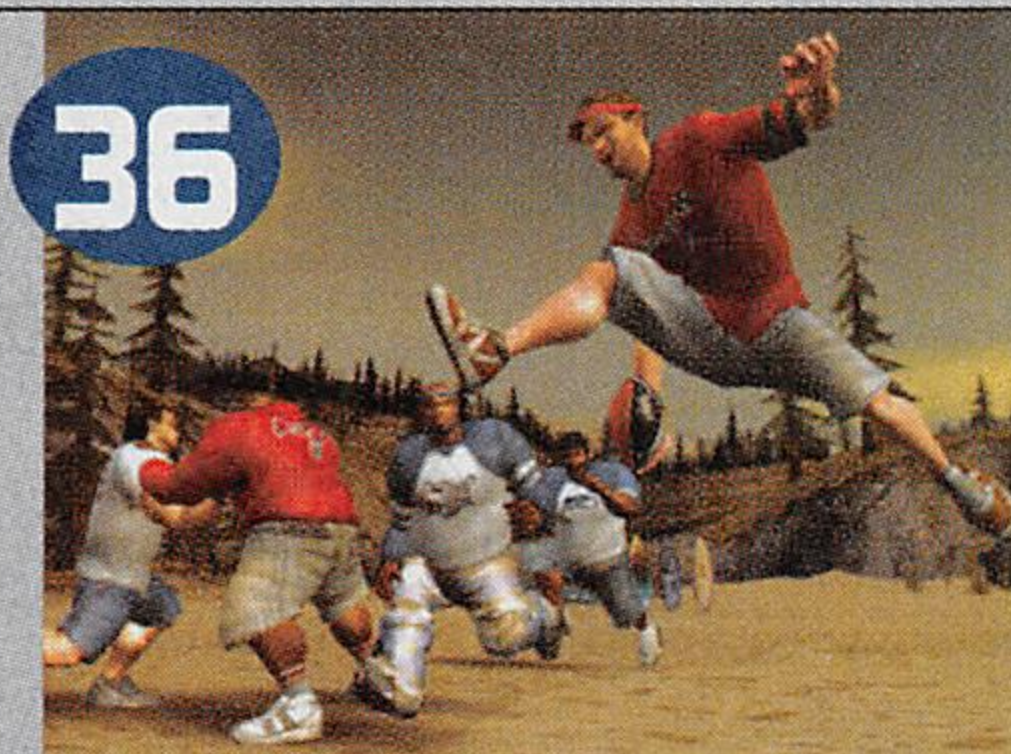
28

▲ **FALLOUT** When butane lighters and flatulence go horribly wrong.



32

▲ **GHOST RECON** "Roger, 6. We've located your 'Simon Says'."



36

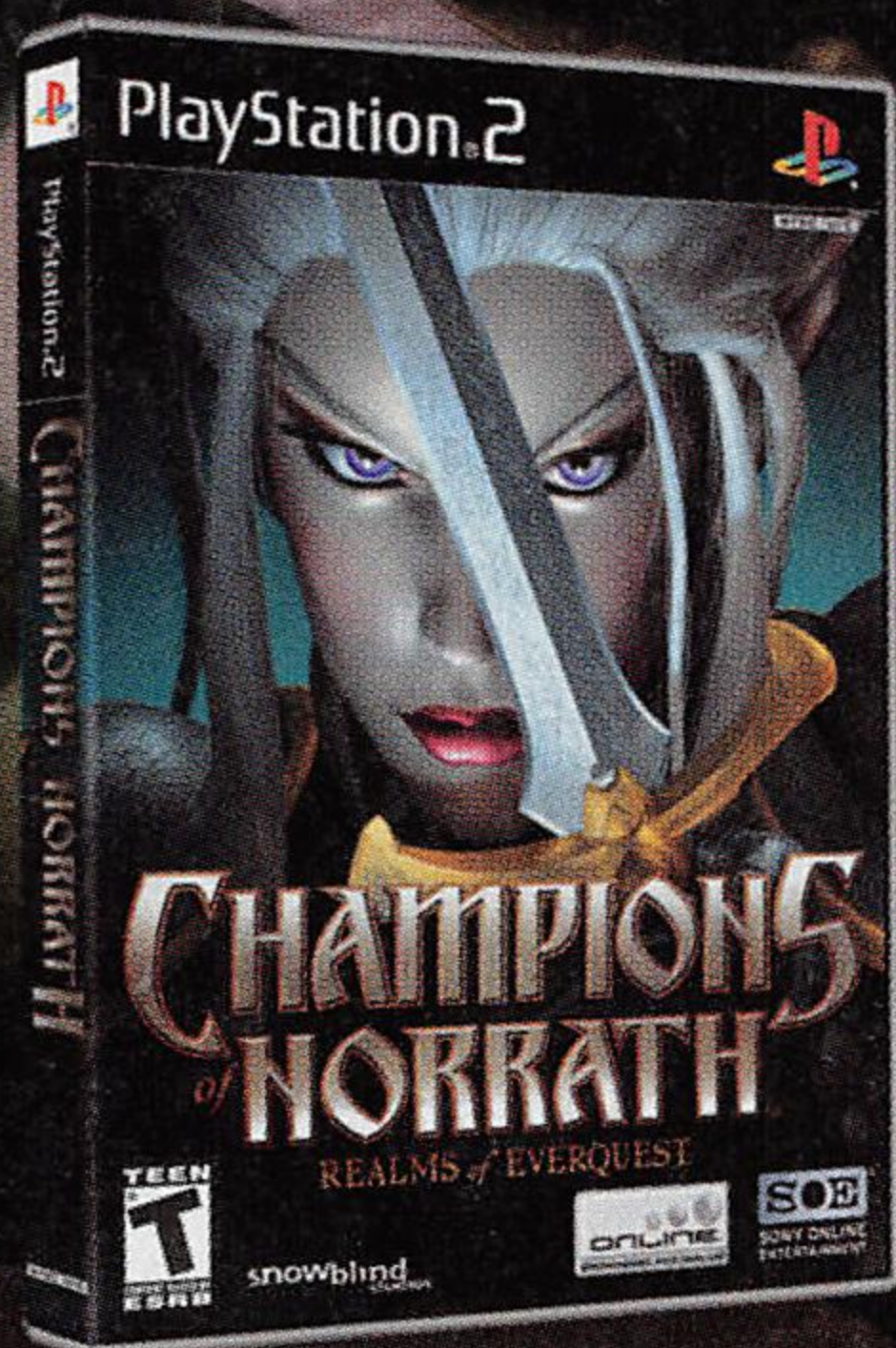
▲ **NFL STREET** Timmy didn't play... he just wanted to dance.

THE PSM MISSION STATEMENT

PSM is the magazine for the gaming elite — the hardcore gamers that support and drive this industry. This is *not* a "mass-market" magazine. We don't focus on "fun for the whole family," or waste space interviewing movie stars that have nothing to do with games. That's just not what we're into.

PSM is also proudly independent. We have no official corporate sponsor, so you can trust that our reviews and opinions will always be 100% our own. Our readers always come first, and we would never, ever betray your trust. This is our promise to you, the hardcore PlayStation 2 gamer, who deserves nothing less. Now let's get this issue going!

©2003 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Champions of Norrath, Realms of EverQuest and the Online icon are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Online play requires internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks are properties of their respective owners. All rights reserved.



"With a feature set this deep, this may indeed be the new champion of action RPGs." — PSM

"Four-player co-op from the creators of Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance? Where do we sign up?" — IGN.com



snowblind
studios



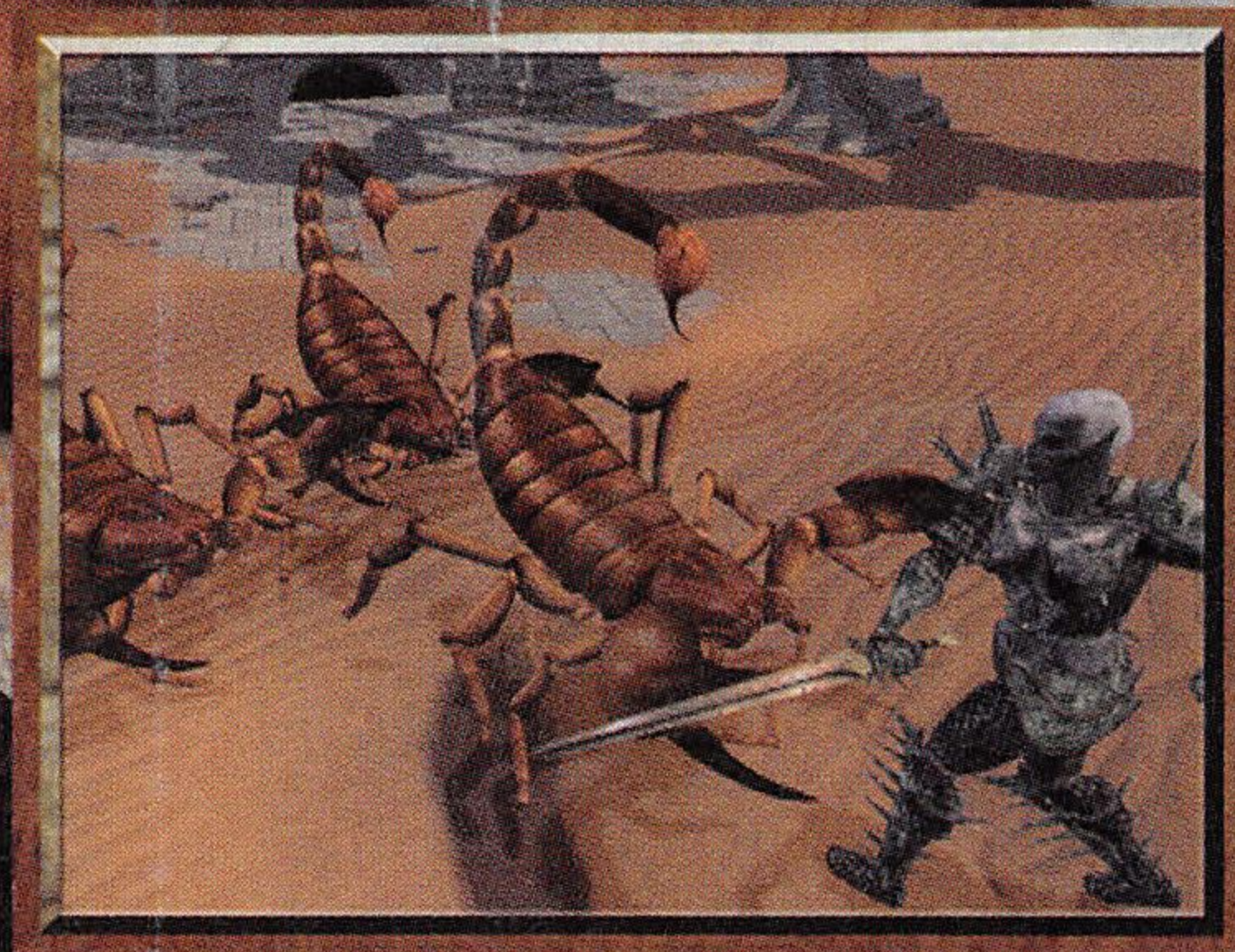
PlayStation 2

CHAMPIONS of NORRATH

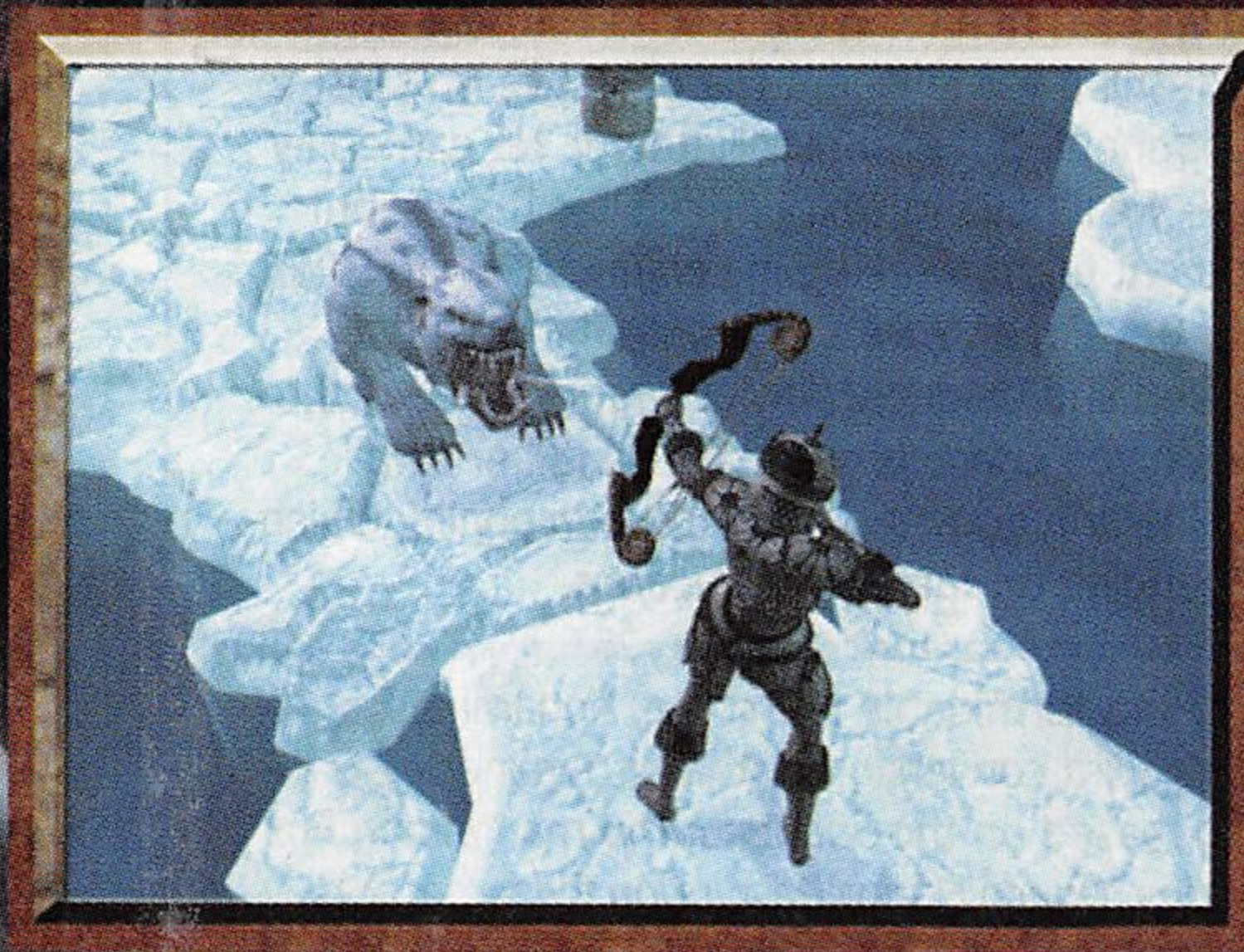
REALMS of EVERQUEST™



4 player combat online
(with no subscription fee) via
SOEGames.net and offline via Multitap.



45 levels of non-stop action with
over 50 areas to explore and conquer.



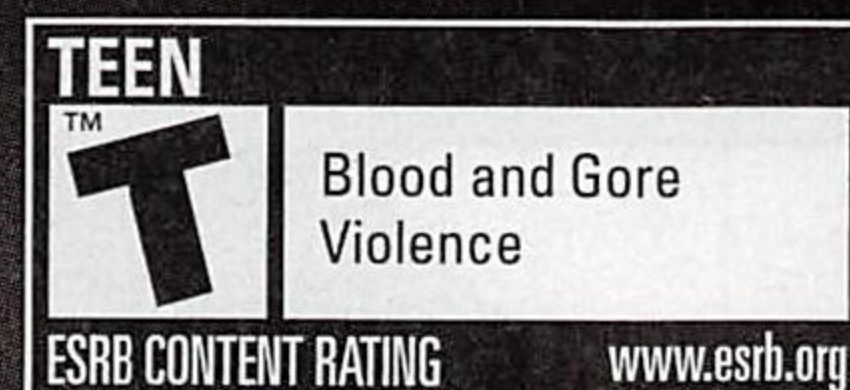
Constantly changing dungeons
and monsters make each
game a new experience.

BE A CHAMPION.

Slay your way through the glorious Realms of EverQuest in a non-stop, hack 'n' slash adventure brimming with heroic quests, beautiful locales, enchanted zones and dark, mysterious dungeons.

Create your Champion from 5 mythic races and 5 classes, customizing the look and name that conveys your unique abilities. Discover, collect, buy and trade over 10,000 items, or create your own. Master weapons, magic and combat to conquer hideous creatures and unforeseen evil. But be forewarned - a Champion shall forever be challenged!

www.championsofnorrath.com



Game Experience may change during online play

SPECIAL REPORT

Konami

The maker of Metal Gear unveils its boldest PS2 lineup ever — and it's not even E3 yet

The developer of such flagship PS2 series as *Metal Gear Solid* and *Silent Hill* recently held its own "mini E3" of sorts at the Sony Metreon in San Francisco, California. The purpose: to take the wraps off four top-secret new games, all set for release by the end of the year. PSM was there, and while *Metal Gear Solid* wasn't anywhere to be seen, there were still surprises a-plenty.

NANOBREAKER

Fresh off his work on *Castlevania: Lament of Innocence*, Koji Igarashi (or simply IGA, as he likes to be called) delivered a shocker in the form of *NanoBreaker*, his first totally original PS2 game. Best described as a mixture of *Castlevania: Symphony of the Night*, *Contra*, and *Devil May Cry*, the game takes place around and inside an island laboratory where researchers have been working with nano-technology — microscopic robots — to improve everyday life. As these things often do, the situation goes awry when the central computer fritzes out and turns the nano-machines against the humans, who, in turn, are transformed into human-robot monstrosities.

Enter Jake Warren, a cyborg warrior bearing a lethal plasma sword and upgradeable abilities. It's his mission to stop the nano uprising at any cost. The gameplay borrows a certain amount of its feel from *Castlevania: LOI* — Jake moves very much like Leon Belmont, but the game structure and enemy interaction have been significantly modified. For instance, Jake has a vertical and horizontal slash — some enemies can only be harmed by one or the other — and when they are struck, their reactions are unique and realistic. Enemies can also be knocked into the air or stabbed through while using the R1 button as an attack modifier, and Jake has several combos that turn the blade into a giant hammer, and more. He also has numerous super attacks, which are charged up by defeating enemies. Finally, Jake can use the plasma blade as a *Castlevania*-style whip, for pulling in enemies, moving objects, and activating switches. We even saw a boss fight where he must pull worm-like creatures out of their spiky shells before attacking them.

The game's still very early, but it's already looking, sounding, and playing solidly. Oh, and when you kill enemies, there's a *lot* of blood.



WWX: RUMBLE ROSE

Perhaps the biggest surprise of Konami's Gamers' Day was the company's first PS2 wrestling title — and it's not like any you've seen before. *WWX: Rumble Rose* is an *all-female* wrestling game where the objective isn't just to beat your opponent, but also humiliate her. No gameplay was shown — we'll have to wait until E3 for that — but the development team, working in conjunction with *WWE SmackDown!* Developer Yuke's, is promising the most visually detailed and uniquely playing grappler yet, with super high-polygon characters, each having her own unique storyline and good girl / bad girl personality which changes depending on the player's actions.

In addition to this formidable foursome, Konami also announced *Ys VI*, a conversion of the hit Japanese PC RPG, *Shaman King*, based on the *Shonen Jump* manga and Fox animated series, *Dance Dance Revolution Extreme*, and *Suikoden IV*, the latest in the classic role-playing series. All eight games will be playable at E3 in May, and we'll have more on all of them leading up to the big show. For now, be sure to check out our Konami developer interviews on beginning on page 48 for more details, and page 79 for a first look at *DDR Extreme*!



<< OH, AND WHEN YOU KILL ENEMIES,
THERE'S A LOT OF BLOOD >>

Tsunami!



NEO CONTRA

2002's blast from the past, *Contra: Shattered Soldier*, is getting a follow-up, but it's anything but a simple one. In what Konami's calling the third generation of *Contra* games, players will shoot their way through enemies in a totally 3D game viewed mainly from a 3/4 view isometric perspective — sort of like *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance*, but more linear.

The game will also introduce a slew of new weapons into the series, plus some returning favorites. Another big new step for *Contra* is the storyline. While it will primarily be an action game, the development team is working on plenty of cinematic sequences to give the game a more action-movie like presentation.

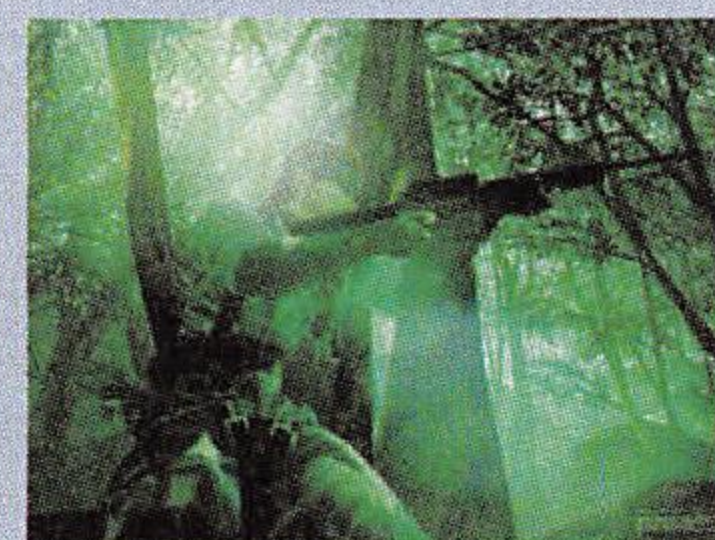
SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM

Just when you thought it was safe to play with the lights off... Konami's tremendously frightening horror series returns. This time, players control a new character by the name of Henry Townshend. Henry's been trapped in his apartment for two weeks, when he discovers a hole in his bathroom wall. He steps through, and into the nightmarish world of *Silent Hill*. Konami is playing off the chilling

idea of your "safe space" — in this case, Henry's apartment — becoming, well, unsafe. Gameplay will take place in both first-person (inside the apartment between missions) and third-person once he passes into *Silent Hill*. Changes are also being made to the combat system, including almost golf game-like control over weapon swinging, and a real time weapon inventory system.



METAL GEAR: MISSING IN ACTION



Snake Eater didn't make an appearance in any form at Konami's event, implying that Hideo Kojima and team are very much "in the trenches" at the moment, programming away to get the game out for the holidays. With *MGS2*, Konami showed the first playable demo of that game at its Gamers' Day in 2001, and bundled the demo soon after with *Zone of The Enders*. The same demo was then shown at E3 2001, with the game releasing a few months later. That said, it's almost certain at this point that E3 2004 will be the first time anyone sees a playable version of *MGS3*, and any demo — if there is one — would have to tag along with the likes of *NanoBreaker* or *Silent Hill 4* in the fall.

THAT'S NOT ALL!

For more on Konami's 2004 lineup, be sure to check out our interviews with the producers of *NanoBreaker*, *Silent Hill 4*, *Suikoden IV*, *Neo Contra*, and *WWX: Rumble Rose*, beginning on page 48!



HITS & MISSES

What's hot and what's not in the gaming world today

[+]

PSP = MULTIPLAYER LOVE FOR ALL

It's official: most, if not all, of PSP's launch titles will feature 802.11b wireless multiplayer support. It's cooler than just playing without link cables, though; imagine strolling through town and being able to search for other PSP owners hosting *SOCOM* games — then joining in!

HARD DISK FINALLY HITS THE U.S.

After years of waiting and promises, the PS2 HDD is here. Have you gotten yours yet? It will definitely be interesting to see how the add-on does in the wake of launch-day hype.

[-]

GT4: THE WAIT CONTINUES

Not only has the game been pushed back to a tentative summer launch, but the chances of U.S. gamers getting their hands on a domestic release of the Japanese *GT4 Prologue* disc are basically zero. *GT* games never seem to hit their original release windows.

FEAR EFFECT 3 OFFICIALLY CANNED

It's been off the radar — and Eidos' release list — for a while, but word has finally come down that *Fear Effect: Inferno* is gone for good. Not only has Eidos passed on the project, but the developer has been unable to find another publisher, so it's uncertain when — if ever — we'll see Hana, Rain, and the rest again.

RUMORS



PSP DESIGN SPECS ALREADY EVOLVING

Our deep cover network of moles have dug up some very interesting dirt on Sony's upcoming super-handheld this month. Remember when Sony said that the design of the PSP was subject to change from the very first image of the system it released? Well, it definitely has. If our sources' information is correct, the unit now has digital direction buttons around the analog stick, not to mention two additional buttons next to the screen. There is also talk of Sony bumping up the PSP's built-in memory to 40MB, and deciding on the screen used in its high-end Clie PDAs (sans touch sensitivity) to deliver its visuals.

Our take: It's no secret that PSP's specs are changing on a weekly (and sometimes daily) basis, so even these features may have been removed by the time you read this. Still, it's good to see that Sony is trying to maximize the capabilities of the PSP, which should hit actual development hardware stage in March.

Probability: High

GTA MOVES TO SAN ANDREAS?

Here's a quicky, but an interesting one nonetheless. In December, Rockstar Games gobbled up the Internet domain name "gtasanandreas.com," a hint that the next game in the series — and presumably the final one of PS2 — will take place in the fictional city of San Andreas referred to in earlier *GTA* games. In the U.K., games retailers have been listing the project as "*GTA4: Sin City*" in their pre-sell databases, adding even more fuel to the next *GTA*'s rumor fire.

Our take: *GTA: San Andreas* just

doesn't strike us as a very marketable title. The U.K.'s guess at "*Sin City*" tickles our fancy a lot more. Time will tell what Rockstar goes with in the end.

Probability: Medium

DUALSHOCK 3 TAKES SHAPE

Speaking of the U.K., word has emerged out of England concerning what we can expect the PS3's controller, tentatively (and likely to be) called the DualShock 3 will look, feel, and function like. In the look and feel department, the pad is said to have an extra trigger button situated under the existing right-hand shoulder buttons. The other part of this rumor is that the controller will supposedly be wireless and rechargeable right out of the box, negating the need for cables or batteries.

Our take: Wireless and rechargeable? Bring it on! Extra trigger? Eh.

Probability: Medium

SEGA'S BIG YEAR-END STUNNER

Finally, this month, we've started to hear whispers that Sega is planning some sort of "epic" game to be released at the end of 2004, the first details of which may be released later this spring. The game will evidently be one of, if not the most ambitious game release of Sega's in years, if not ever, although whether it's destined only for PS2 remains to be seen.

Our take: The last time Sega announced an "epic," it was *Shenmue* for Dreamcast, which received a lukewarm reception in the U.S. at best. Let's hope that, if anything, this new game, if real, is something that any gamer could get into and love.

Probability: Medium

FIRST LOOK FIGHT CLUB: THE GAME

But how will you tell your friends about it?

If the first rule of *Fight Club* is you don't talk about *Fight Club*, you're think there'd be a rule in there about making a game based on the brutal suspense movie. Evidently not, though, since Vivendi is doing just that.

Fight Club the game is a one-one-one fighter (big surprise, huh?) being developed Genuine Games, a team comprised of staffers who have worked on *Ratchet & Clank* and the *Knockout Kings* series. Details on the fighting system are slim at the moment, but it will be faithful to the movie in many ways, including tap outs and K.O.s. We'll have more on the game when it's unveiled at E3.



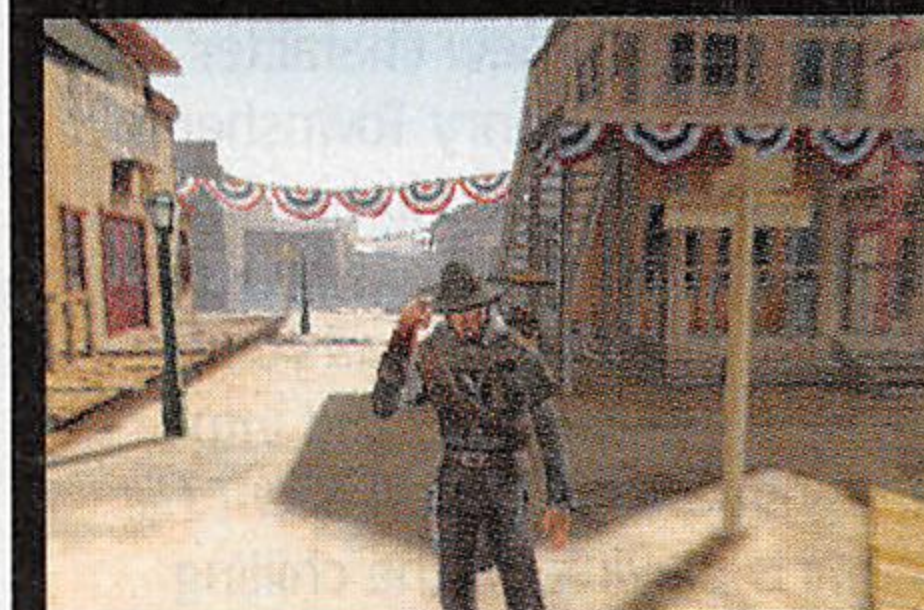
"I am Jack's shirtless in-game model!"

GAME UPDATE BACK FROM THE DEAD

Maybe it should be called "*Not So Dead, Red Revolver*"

Sent to an early grave by Capcom, the promising Wild West action game, *Red Dead Revolver*, has been resurrected by none other than Rockstar Games. Which makes sense, really, since the game is (and was) being developed by what's now known as Rockstar San Diego, the same studio that brought us *Midnight Club II*.

The game is still being tweaked and refined beyond what it was in past showings; the game has always looked great, but the controls definitely needed work. With a year-end release on the table, Rockstar San Diego will hopefully have enough time to make both their dreams, and those of gun-slinging, horse-riding action fans come true.



▲ Red rides again — hey, that might make a snappy subtitle for the sequel.

Featuring: FAT JOE



complex
published by Marc Ecko
subscribe today at
magazine.com
eckō.com
shop online



FIRST LOOK

DARKWATCH: CURSE OF THE WEST

We've heard of cowboys and Indians, but cowboys and vampires? Yikes!

Okay, we can legitimately say we've seen it all. Sammy Studios' latest PS2 foray is a "vampire western first-person shooter." Yep. The first U.S. developed project from the company, the game stars a vampire cowboy named Jericho who must protect an Old West town from evil.

Jericho will be able to use up-close melee weapons and vehicles (plus horses) in addition to a number of guns. Since he's a vampire, he'll also be able to transform during combat to increase his accuracy and tap a number of other supernatural powers. In another interesting twist, the game will feature a reputation system, whereby everything you do will affect the way other characters interact with you. Kill an innocent, for example, and their family will hold a grudge.

The game will be out at year's end, and we'll have more soon, so stay tuned!

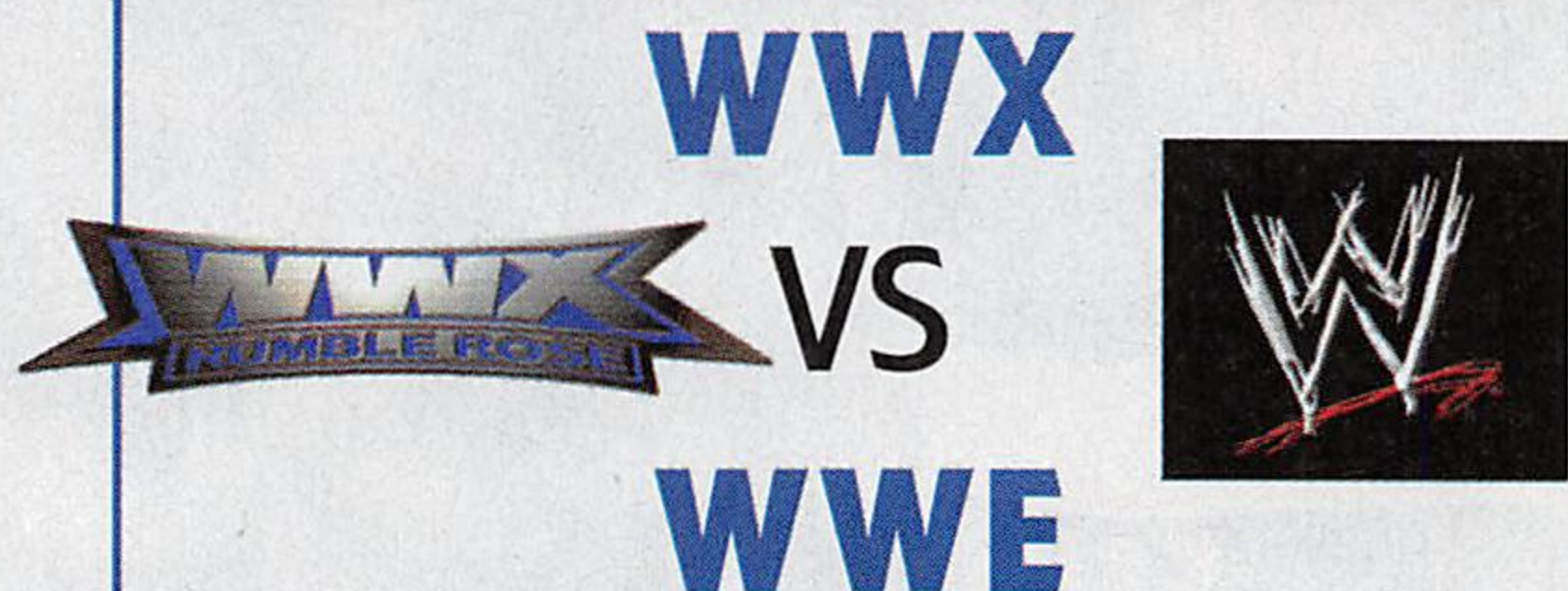
**ONLY IN
PSM
FIRST LOOK**



▲ Blasting these skeletons is recommended, but accidentally hitting that TNT barrel in the process definitely isn't.

◀ High-ho vampire horse, away!

VERSUS MODE



ROUND ONE: BACKGROUND

WWX: Konami's wrestling league where girls rule the ring
WWE: Vince McMahon's league where guys rule the ring

Advantage: WWX

WWX: Every match features intense all-girl action
WWE: Every match features intensely sweaty guys

Advantage: WWX

ROUND TWO: SUPERSTARS

WWX: Grappling beauties wearing next to nothing
WWE: The guys have long hair and wear next to nothing

Advantage: WWX

WWX: Girls have names like "Dixie"
WWE: Guys have names like "The Rock" and "Undertaker"

Advantage: WWE

ROUND THREE: BEHIND THE SCENES

WWX: The girls shave their legs
WWE: The guys shave their legs

Advantage: WWX

WWX: There's a lot of backstabbing going on backstage
WWE: There's a lot of backstabbing going on backstage

Advantage: Draw

WINNER: WWX

UNCOMMENTARY

GIVE 'EM A CHANCE!

By Randy Nelson



Some of the best games you've never played aren't from two or three years ago; they're gathering dust on store shelves right now. Games such as *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* and *Beyond Good & Evil*, to name the two most glaring examples, and excellent games that (almost) no one is buying. They're not the only ones — and it's a shame.

What's going on? Looking at the monthly top 10 lists, they're full of sequels. Not that these follow-ups to previous great games aren't great in and of themselves, but there are lots of original games on PS2 that should be getting just as much attention. But, despite glowing review scores and, in some cases, prominent TV advertising, they're still on the fast track to the bargain bin. I have a feeling that a lot of gamers are simply afraid of trying something new — and hey, when you only have \$50 to spend, it's best to go with a proven name, right? Not always.

Unfortunately, games such as *Devil May Cry 2* have revealed flaws in that philosophy. I know that I'm afraid; afraid that, if this trend continues, PS3, despite all its creative potential, will be a machine of sequels and limited vision, mostly because publishers will deem it too risky to release original games.

So, here's what I propose, and it will require your help. First off, if you see a game that looks cool and has scored well, at least rent it. I guarantee that you'll be amazed at how many great games there are out there that you wouldn't normally buy. Next, if you like the game, tell a friend about it — or, better yet, let them try it out.

These are games that people deserve to know about. I know I'll be doing my best to champion them, because a world without great original games is like the future in *The Terminator* in my book — and that's a damned scary thought, indeed. Well, I can think of scarier thoughts, like games based on 20-year-old TV shows or starring little plastic soldiers, but you get the idea. What's that? You can't be serious! I'm heading for my bunker...

ANTICIPATION^{XI}



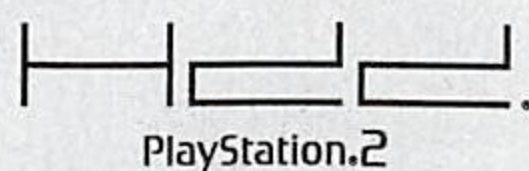
MARCH 2004



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

PlayStation²

www.us.playstation.com

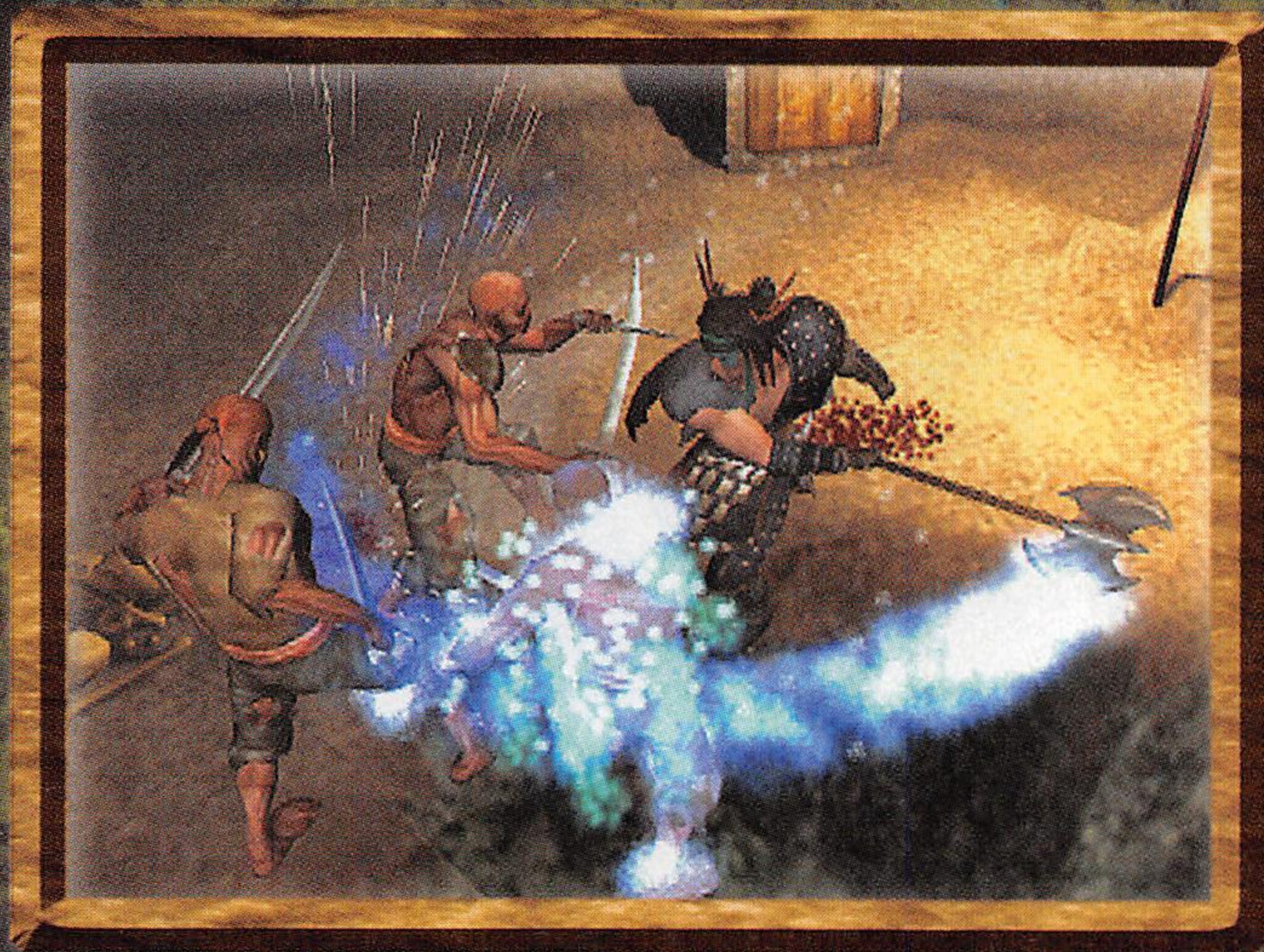


PlayOnline.

SQUARE ENIX.



Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). Players are responsible for all applicable Internet and subscription fees. Children under the age of 13 are not permitted to use PlayOnline services, including games. Acceptance of certain agreements is required. A valid credit card required to set up account. Free subscription for 30 days. Some restrictions may apply. ©2001-2004 SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. All Rights Reserved. Title Design by Yoshitaka Amano. FINAL FANTASY is a registered trademark of Square Enix Co., Ltd. SQUARE ENIX, the Square Enix logo, PLAYONLINE, the PlayOnline logo are trademarks of Square Enix Co., Ltd. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. HDD logo is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

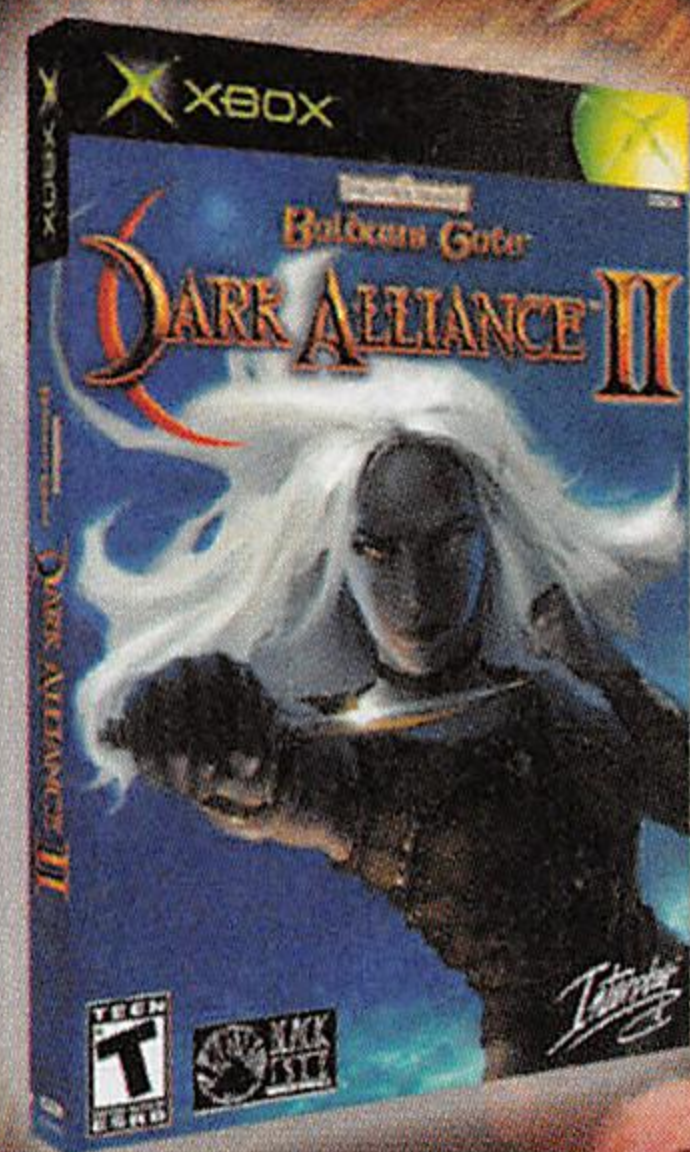
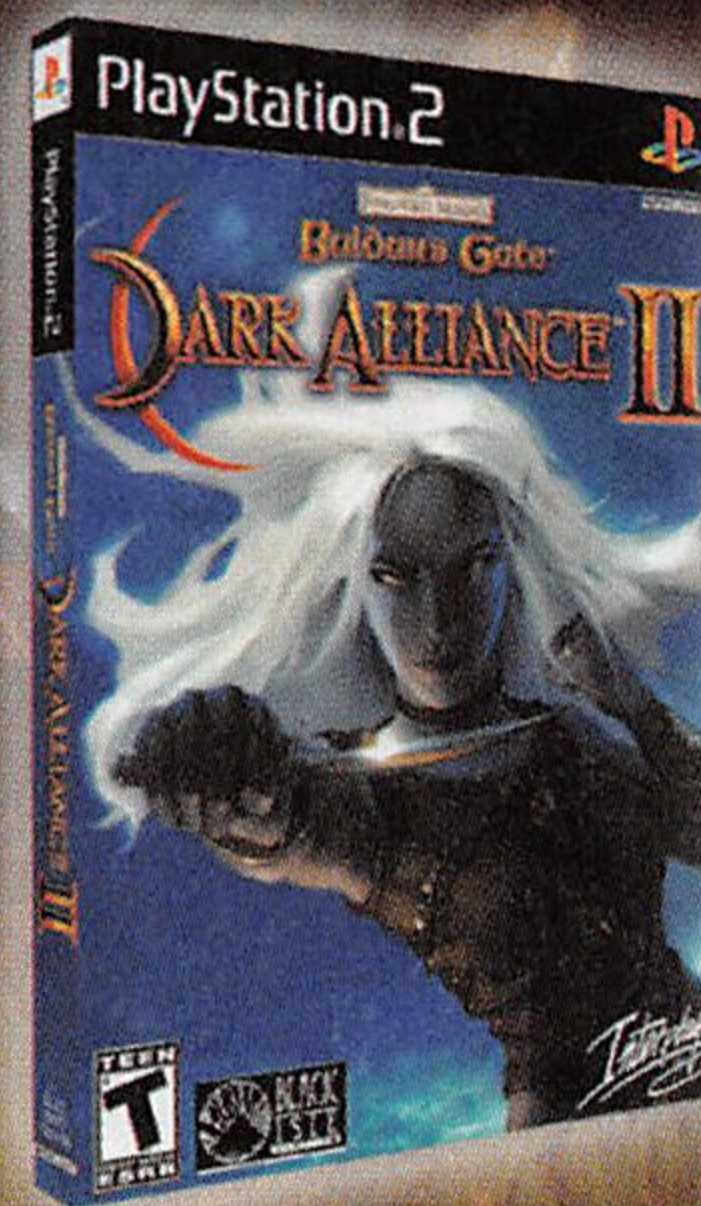


STAND TOGETHER OR BE TORN APART.



5 NEW HEROES!

- Hack your way or cast powerful spells through over 80 perilous levels
- Hidden areas, secret characters, and hundreds of items
- Forge unique magical weapons and armor to maximize the damage you inflict in battle
- Single or two-player modes of play



Blood
Use of Alcohol
Violence



PlayStation 2

Baldur's Gate, Dark Alliance, Forgotten Realms, the Forgotten Realms Logo, Dungeons & Dragons, the Dungeons & Dragons logo, and Wizards of the Coast and its logo are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., in the U.S.A. and other countries, and are used with permission. © 2004 Wizards. HASBRO and its logo are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. Software © 2004 Interplay Entertainment Corp. and used with permission under license from Atari Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved. Black Isle Studios, the Black Isle Studios logo and the Interplay logo are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. The Vivendi Universal Games logo is a trademark of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.

FORGOTTEN REALMS

Baldur's Gate™

DARK ALLIANCE™ III



CHECKPOINT

You've found it: your one-stop spot for all the best stuff headed your way
(Please keep in mind that release dates do change—don't blame us if they do!)

Current Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Alias	Action	Acclaim
All-Star Baseball 2005	Sports	Acclaim
Backyard Baseball	Sports	Atari
Black 9	Adventure	Majesco
Crimson Sea	Action	Koei
Drakengard	RPG	Square Enix
Driver 3	Racing	Atari
Final Fantasy XI	RPG	Square Enix
Headhunter: Redemption	Action	Sega
Legends of Wrestling: Showdown	Sports	Acclaim
LifeLine	Action	Konami
Lobo	Action	Kemco
Megaman Anniversary Collection	Platform	Capcom
MLB 2005	Sports	SCEA
MTX: Mototrax	Sports	Activision
MX Unleashed	Sports	THQ
Onimusha Blade Warrior	Fighting	Capcom
Pitfall: The Lost Expedition	Adventure	Activision
Resident Evil Outbreak	Horror	Capcom
Rise to Honor	Fighting	SCEA
Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow	Stealth	Ubisoft
The Suffering	Horror	Midway
War Chess	Board	Jack of All Games
X-Files: Resist or Serve	Action	Vivendi Universal

March's Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Alias	Action	Acclaim
Gradius V	Shooter	Konami
Hitman Contracts	Action	Eidos
King of Fighters 02	Fighting	SNK
Metal Slug 3	Shooter	SNK
NBA Ballers	Sports	Midway
Red Dead Revolver	Shooter	Rockstar
Shrek 2	Action	Activision
Supercar GT	Racing	Electronic Arts
Ten Pin Alley 2	Sports	Jack of All Games
X-Men: Legends	RPG	Activision



▲ A real-time RPG with the cast of the *X-Men* has smash hit written all over it in big, mutated, glowing letters.

PSM Games to Watch



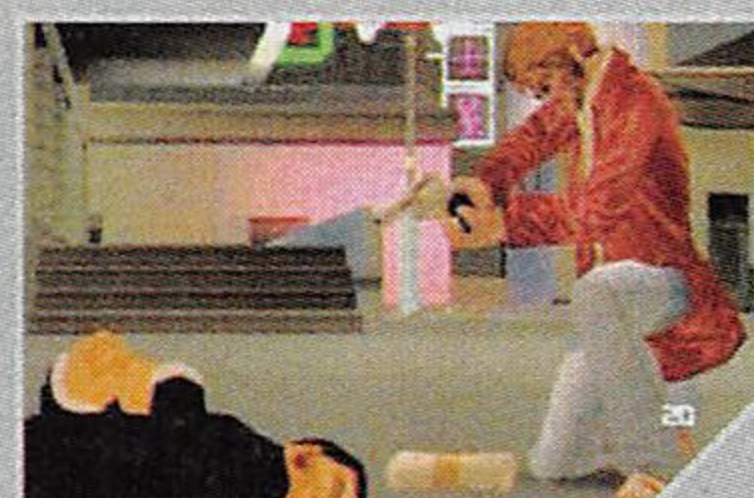
Syphon Filter: Omega Strain

Publisher: Sony CEA **Type:** Action **Release Date:** Summer
The original *Syphon Filter* came out of nowhere and challenged the first *MGS* for stealth supremacy. *Omega Strain* is the latest in the series and promises more action and episonage — but it's also an online title, and over a hundred weapons are available. Could this give *Metal Gear* a run for its money?



Narc

Publisher: Midway **Type:** Action **Release Date:** September
Narc was a classic coin muncher back in the day, and Midway is looking to bring it to a new generation. Like the original, players clean the streets of druggies, but get more points for a solid bust than a kill. But Midway is keeping the old ultra-violence that proved so popular: players can zoom in on specific limbs with everything from machine guns to axes.



Gran Turismo 4

Publisher: Sony CEA **Type:** Racing **Release Date:** June
Sony's *Gran Turismo* series has pushed hardware sales with every new version, and the this one is going to be no different. *GT4* is shaping up to be the most graphically gorgeous racing game the system has ever seen, and with over five hundred cars to choose from, every racing fan will be gunning for the finish line.



Star Ocean III: Till The End of Time

Publisher: Square Enix **Type:** RPG **Release Date:** August
Star Ocean: The Second Story for PSone was such a popular RPG that fans demanded a sequel — and it only took five years. Square Enix has every intention of turning this game into a title that will give the *Final Fantasy* franchise a run for its money. Unfortunately, it's over half a year away, so grab a copy of *FFX-2* if you don't have one already.



Resident Evil Outbreak

Publisher: Capcom **Type:** Action/Adventure **Release Date:** March
The survival horror genre wouldn't exist if it weren't for Capcom's breakthrough PSone title. Fans have clamored for an overhaul to the series over the years, and *Outbreak* promises to do just that by letting gamers explore the devastation of Raccoon City online with up to three other players. Will Milla Jovovich have a cameo?

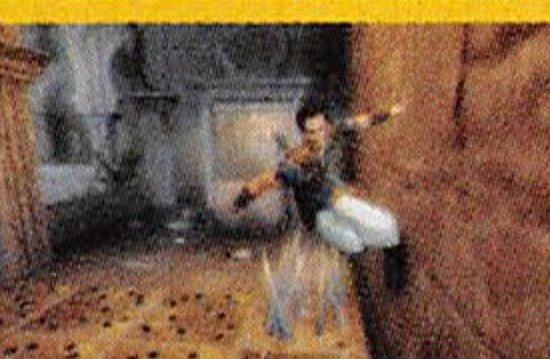


WHAT YOU SHOULD BE PLAYING



1. Final Fantasy X-2

Pub: Square Enix **Dev:** Square Enix **Type:** RPG
The maker of the world's best-selling RPGs returns with the first true sequel to one of its *FF* games — and it's easy to get into, if it's your first *Final Fantasy*.



2. Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time

Pub: Ubisoft **Dev:** Ubisoft **Type:** Adventure
Who couldn't love the ability to travel through time, run up walls, and flip over foes with the grace of an acrobat from Cirque du Soliel?



3. Fatal Frame 2: Crimson Butterfly

Publisher: Tecmo **Developer:** Tecmo **Type:** Adventure
The sequel to the scariest videogame ever made lives up to expectations as a pair of twins explore an abandoned village devastated by an ancient curse.

A NEW TEAM. A FIERCE POWER.



TM & © BVS Entertainment, Inc. and BVS International N.V. All Rights Reserved. TM & © ABC Family Worldwide, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
© and TM Disney

Weekends on


JETIX™

Mornings on
abc family™
8:30am/7:30c

Cool Stuff

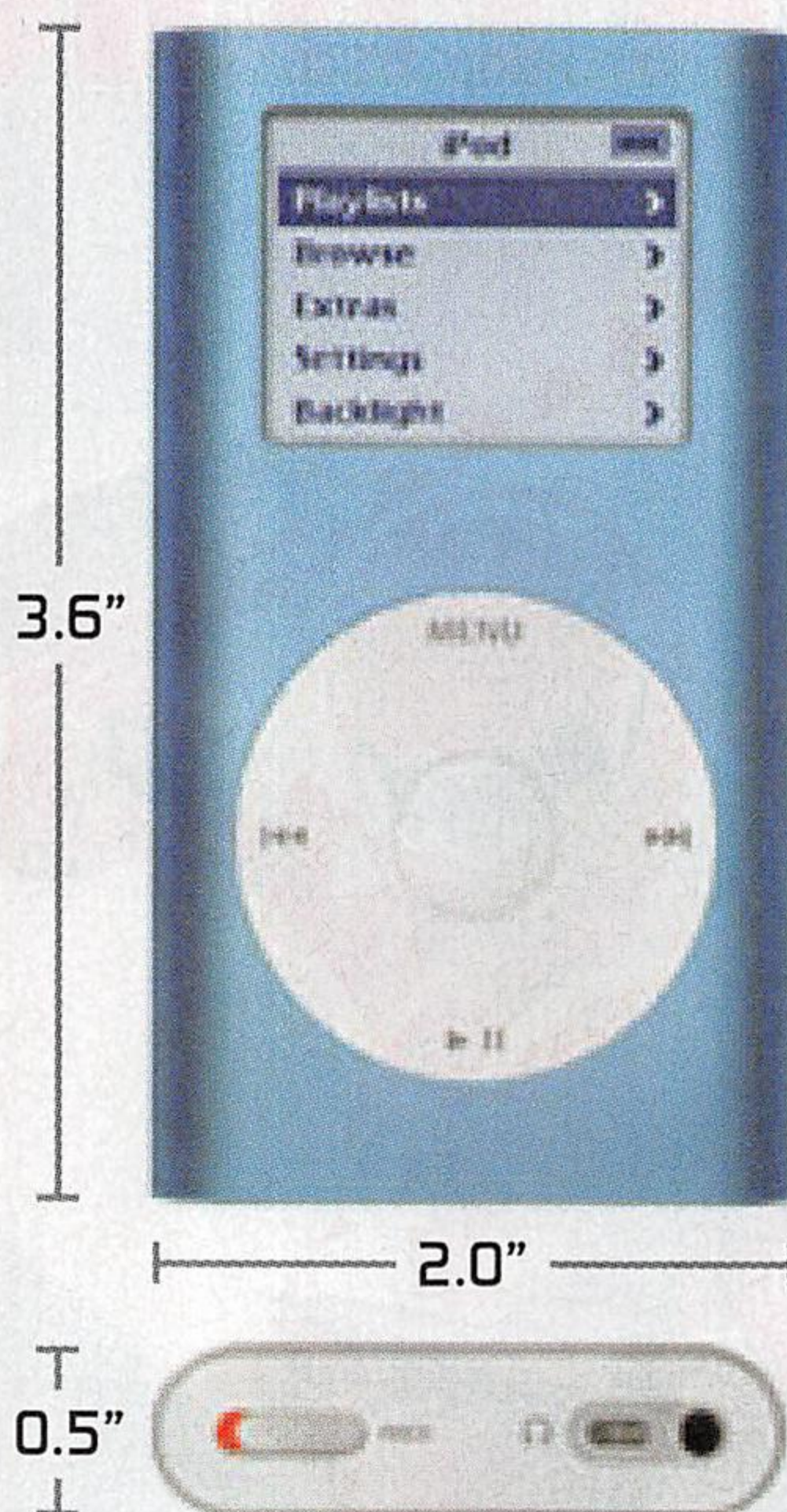
Here's a look at some of the hottest new gear and goodies you should keep an eye out for

iPod Mini

From: Apple
Price: \$249
Available: Now

Apple, famous as much for the iPod as it is for the Macintosh, has recently released a miniature version of their portable music player. The new iPod mini stores a thousand songs (enough for a three day car trip), has a backlit screen, and is smaller than any cellphone produced in the U.S. It comes with four games installed (*Solitaire*, *Brick*, *Music Quiz* and *Parachute* — apparently *Vice City* is a few years off), as well as a calendar and other features. The mini weighs a mere 3.6 ounces and slips fashionably into any pocket. While it's too late to ask for as a Christmas gift, there's always your birthday. Now you can take your favorite gaming soundtracks on the road.

► The iPod Mini is about the size of a business card, and only about a thick as ten of them!



Readers' Most Wanted

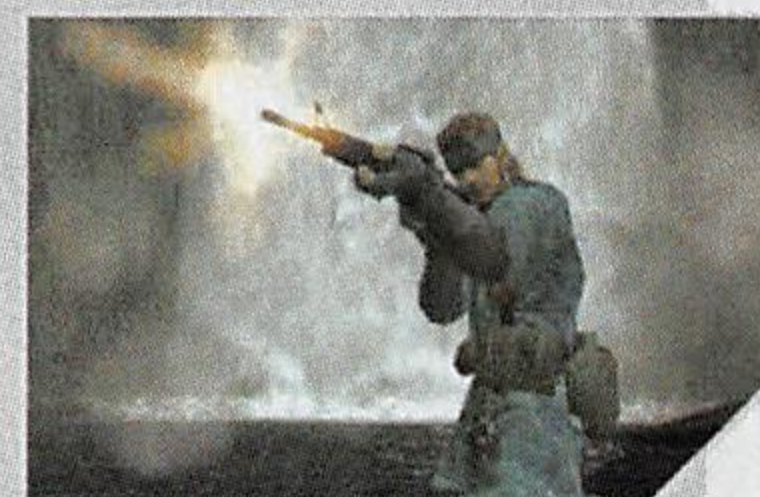
1 METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Release Date: TBA



#1 Last Month

Still on top, still almost a year away. Patience, grasshopper...



2 GRAND TURISMO 4

Publisher: Sony CEA
Dev: Polyphony Digital
Release Date: Summer



#3 Last Month

GT4 moves up the list as its release approaches. Maybe it'll hit #1 soon?



3 KINGDOM HEARTS II

Publisher: Square Enix
Developer: Square Enix
Release Date: TBA



#2 Last Month

KHII drops a spot as anticipation for GT4 gains steam.



New 4 FINAL FANTASY XII

New This Month!

Pub: Square Enix Dev: Square Enix
Release Date: TBA
Despite few details, this one's still hot!



#5 Last Month

5 RESIDENT EVIL: OUTBREAK

Publisher: Capcom Developer: Capcom
Release Date: March
Survival Horror proves it's still got it.



#6 Last Month

6 DRIVER 3

Publisher: Atari Developer: Reflections
Release Date: Summer
Will the third time be the charm?

New 7 STARCRAFT: GHOST

New This Month!

Publisher: Blizzard Developer: Blizzard
Release Date: Summer
This "sci-fi Metal Gear" is gaining ground.



#4 Last Month

8 FINAL FANTASY XI

Pub: Sony CEA Dev: Square Enix
Release Date: March
Square Enix owns the chart this month!



#10 Last Month

9 MAFIA

Pub: Gathering Dev: Illusion Softworks
Release Date: March
Guns, gangsters, and auto chases? Yeah!



#7 Last Month

10 XENOSAGA II

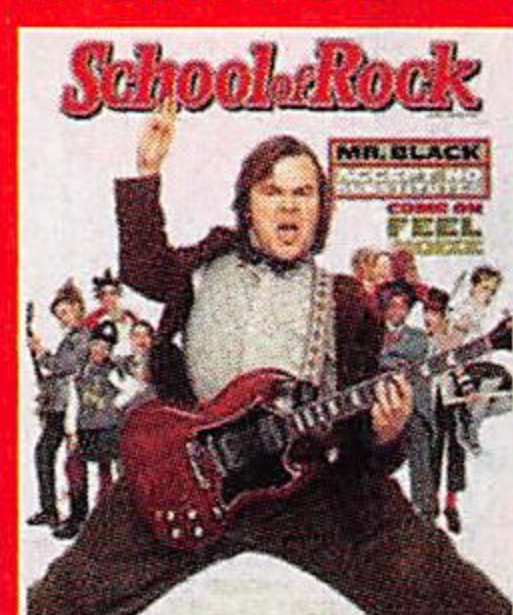
Pub: Namco Dev: Monolith Soft
Release Date: TBA
Giant robots + epic action = big RPG

CAST YOUR VOTE!

Visit www.psmonline.com and pick your most wanted game from our list of the hottest upcoming releases. We'll tally the results, and print 'em here each issue!

Hot In March

OUR TOP DVD PICKS



SCHOOL OF ROCK

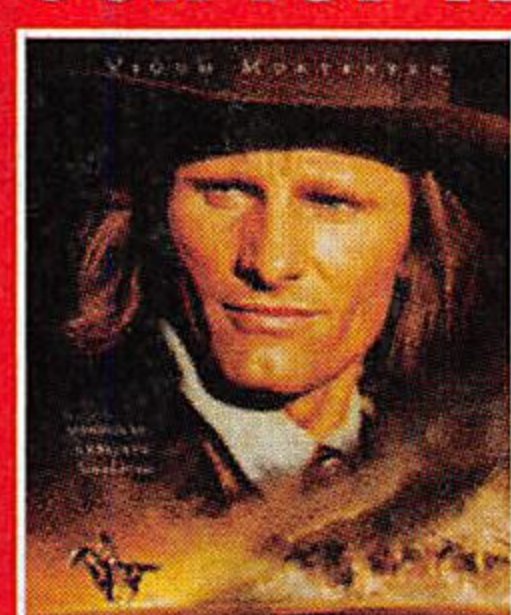
RELEASE DATE: MARCH 9
Jack Black is funny as ever in this flick directed by *Dazed and Confused's* Richard Linklater, playing a down and out rocker who gets a job as a substitute teacher — and turns his class into a heavy metal band for a competition.



FUTURAMA VOL. 3

RELEASE DATE: MARCH 2
Matt Groening's "other" creation has a sense of humor that *The Simpsons* could never reach because it's set hundreds of years in the future. If you're tiring of Homer's antics, check out the misadventures of Fry, Bender and the rest of the gang.

OUR TOP MOVIE PICKS



HIDALGO

OPENS ON: MARCH 5
March has slim pickings at the Cineplex, but check out *Hidalgo* starring Viggo "Aragorn" Mortensen. It's the true story of a man and his horse who enter a grueling 2,000 mile race across the Arabian Desert where anything goes.



THE GIRL NEXT DOOR

OPENS ON: MARCH 12
Starlette Elisha Cuthbert plays the new neighbor of Emile Hirsch, a young man destined for a great career in politics. The two fall in love, and Cuthbert is forced to reveal a secret from her past — she's a former porn star.

NPD Funworld TRSTS

SALES CHARTS

TOP 10 PS2 GAMES FOR NOVEMBER

1. Medal of Honor Rising Sun



2. Final Fantasy X-2
3. SOCOM II: U.S. Navy SEALs
4. Need For Speed: Underground
5. Tony Hawk's Underground
6. True Crime: Streets of L.A.
7. Madden NFL 2004
8. WWE SmackDown! HCTP
9. LOTR: The Return of The King
10. NBA Live 2004

TOP 10 PS1 GAMES FOR NOVEMBER

1. Beyblade



2. Motocross Mania
3. Spec Ops
4. Ford Racing
5. Shrek: Treasure Hunt
6. My Disney Kitchen
7. Spongebob Supersponge
8. Action Bass
9. Pac-Man World
10. Namco Museum Vol. 3

OVERALL TOP 10 FOR NOVEMBER

1. Mario Kart: Double Dash!! (GCN)



2. MOH Rising Sun (PS2)
3. Final Fantasy X-2 (PS2)
4. GTA: Double Pack (Xbox)
5. SOCOM II (PS2)
6. NFS Underground (PS2)
7. Tony Hawk's Underground (PS2)
8. True Crime (PS2)
9. Super Mario Advance 4 (GBA)
10. Madden NFL 2004 (PS2)

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF
A CAREFULLY CALCULATED ASS-KICKING



Be warned - this is not a mere battle of brawn. In this world, war must be waged with a wary hand. Journey from land to land, battle to battle as you deftly command your army of demons, centaurs and dragons. Exploit their strengths. Mind their weaknesses. Slash, claw and slay your way to power - and if you must, unleash your wrath. Cast magic spells. Pit darkness against light. Bend fire, wind and water to your will. And ultimately dominate the world.



PlayStation®2



wrathunleashed.com

LucasArts and the LucasArts logo are registered trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. © 2004 Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd. & © or TM as indicated. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and / or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Sammy Studios

© Sammy / Jumps Corporation 2004. © KUROSAWA PRODUCTION, Inc. / Character concept by Moebius / Opening & Ending Theme Music Composed & Performed by Ryuzhi Sakamoto / Opening & Ending Theme Music by RYUZA music / Published by Sammy Studios, Inc. Sammy stylized S and all Sammy trademarks are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sammy Corporation. ALIEN and THE FIFTH ELEMENT are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



PlayStation.2

Dimps
DIGITAL IMAGINATION



Blood and Gore
Violence



Perfect your mastery of the samurai way in heart-pounding melée combat. Become a legend as one of seven warriors making their last stand against a brutal army.



Fight your way through a massive futuristic city, taking on more than 40 unique enemies designed by sci-fi visualist Moebius (*Alien*, *The Fifth Element*).



The greatest samurai tale of all time.

DIGITALLY REMASTERED.

Inspired by Akira Kurosawa's masterpiece and created in collaboration with world renowned artists, *Seven Samurai* 20XX takes a timeless action tale far into the future.



Enter a cinematic experience full of inspired moments, dazzling special effects and opening and ending theme music by Academy Award® winner Ryuichi Sakamoto (*The Last Emperor*).

七人の侍

SEVEN SAMURAI

2 0 X X

www.sevensamurai20XX.com



GOVERNMENT WARNING:

ACCORDING TO THE SURGEON GENERAL, WOMEN SHOULD NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF BIRTH DEFECTS.

NEW LOWER PRICE
MAVER
\$ 5.50

Special Price \$ 6.85

liament \$ 6.85
6.85

MAVER \$5.50

\$ 5.50

WARNING

NO SMOKING



1985

Under 18 No Tobacco We Card

Sale of cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, powdered tobacco, bidis, herbal cigarettes, or other tobacco products, rolling papers or pipes to persons under 18 years of age is PROHIBITED BY LAW.

On Sale Here

NEWS

©2004 truth



connect-truth.com keyword: cha-ching

CAMEL



Pleasure to Burn

connect

Tobacco companies make \$1.8 billion from sales to under-age people every year.

A tobacco company has called teenagers "tomorrow's potential customers."

Tobacco signage is often placed at a child's eye level.

VERICK
NEW
POWER
ICE!

Bring on the
Pleasure!

Newport

SAVE
\$1.00

Specially Marked
Box Packings Only!

\$ 6.50



CONTENTS

- 40 AirForce Delta Strike
- 24 Champions Of Norrath
- 40 Culdcept
- 28 Fallout: BOS
- 32 Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm
- 26 Rise To Honor



- 41 Hardware Reviews
- 36 NFL Street
- 38 World Champ. Pool 2004
- 37 R-Type Final
- 38 Star Trek: SU
- 30 Winning Eleven 7 Intl.
- 39 Wrath Unleashed



SCORING

- 10 CLASSIC**
A rare gem; Our highest recommendation
- 9 OUTSTANDING**
One of the better games this year
- 8 VERY GOOD**
You can't go wrong
- 7 GOOD**
A solid game
- 6 OKAY**
Kind of fun, but no big deal
- 5 50-50**
You've got to love the subject matter
- 4 LACKING**
Big flaws really hurt this game
- 3 BAD**
Not fun at all
- 2 AWFUL**
This game is an insult
- 1 WHY?**
Why would anyone do this to us?

We take our reviews very seriously. We spend hours upon hours playtesting each title so that we can give you the absolute best information to help you buy.

Games that score an 8, 9 or 10 earn a Bronze, Silver or Gold **PSM Must-Buy Award**. We don't hand these beauties out easily, so if you see one on a review, a game box or advertising, you'll want to be sure to check that game out.

Finally, when looking up past scores, keep in mind that older games usually wouldn't fare as well if they were reviewed today.

**PSM
GAME
OF THE
MONTH**

▶ Because developer Snowblind made *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance*, this game feels a lot more refined and evolutionary than other action RPGs.

▼ Some enemies block with their shields, just as you can.



CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH: REALMS OF EVERQUEST

The future of action RPGs lies in Norrath's past...

**PSM
MUST-BUY
SILVER**

**ONLINE
COMPATIBLE**



▲ Some warriors have more curves than others...

There have been several action RPGs released recently, but *Champions of Norrath* is easily the best of the bunch. We're guessing it's because this is the only one actually developed by Snowblind, the same guys who created the original *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance* and that graphically gorgeous game engine that everybody else has since licensed.



◀ Occasionally, you'll come across a truly wicked weapon. The Ice Flame here does both heat and cold damage simultaneously — it's brutal.

In fact, let's start with graphics, because the PS2 has rarely looked better. Although it constricts your field of vision somewhat, we constantly used the close-up, zoomed in camera just so we could admire the visuals. Textures are solid, seamless and impossibly detailed, the models are high-poly and animate very smoothly, and everything is vibrantly colored and lushly lit. And yes, Snowblind's trademark water is back, in crystal clear, brown, green, and even bright orange, lava-licious varieties.

Bigger and Better

Champions is also the only recently released action RPG that really strives to expand and enhance the genre. For example, each level's layout and enemy placement are randomly generated, adding immensely to the game's replay value. Item drops are also randomized, though this also leads to one of our few complaints: there are *tons* of items

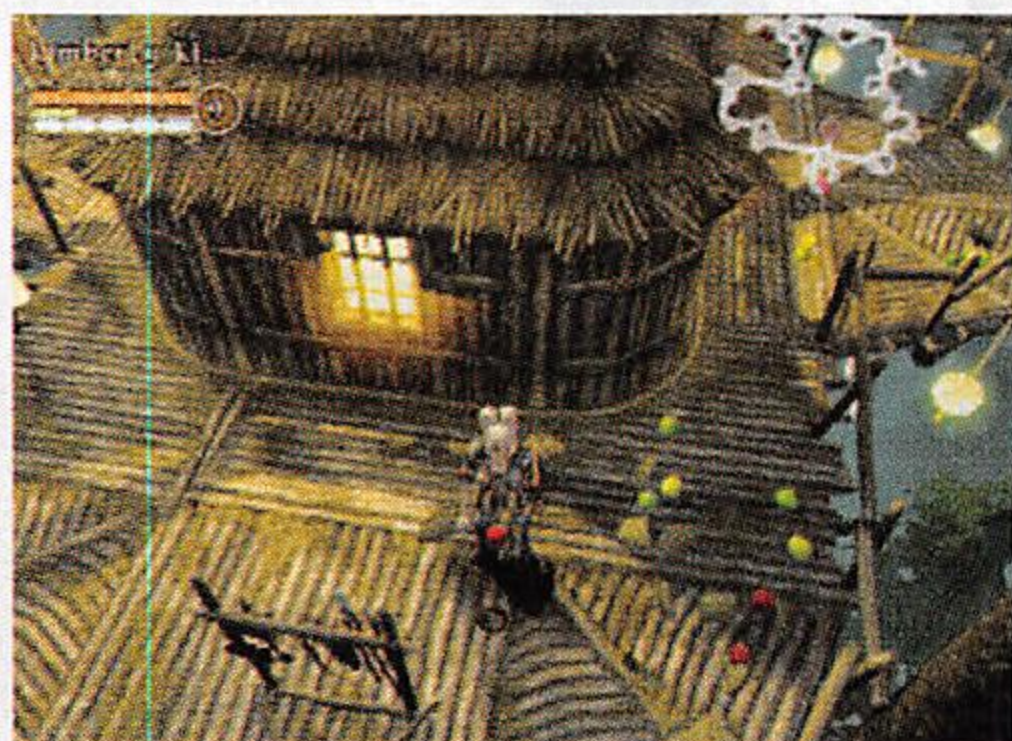
<< SNOWBLIND'S TRADEMARK WATER IS BACK, IN CRYSTAL CLEAR, BROWN, GREEN, AND EVEN BRIGHT ORANGE >>

dropped, but the really valuable stuff is rare. However, we made a ton of money selling off extra booty, so this is a minor quibble.

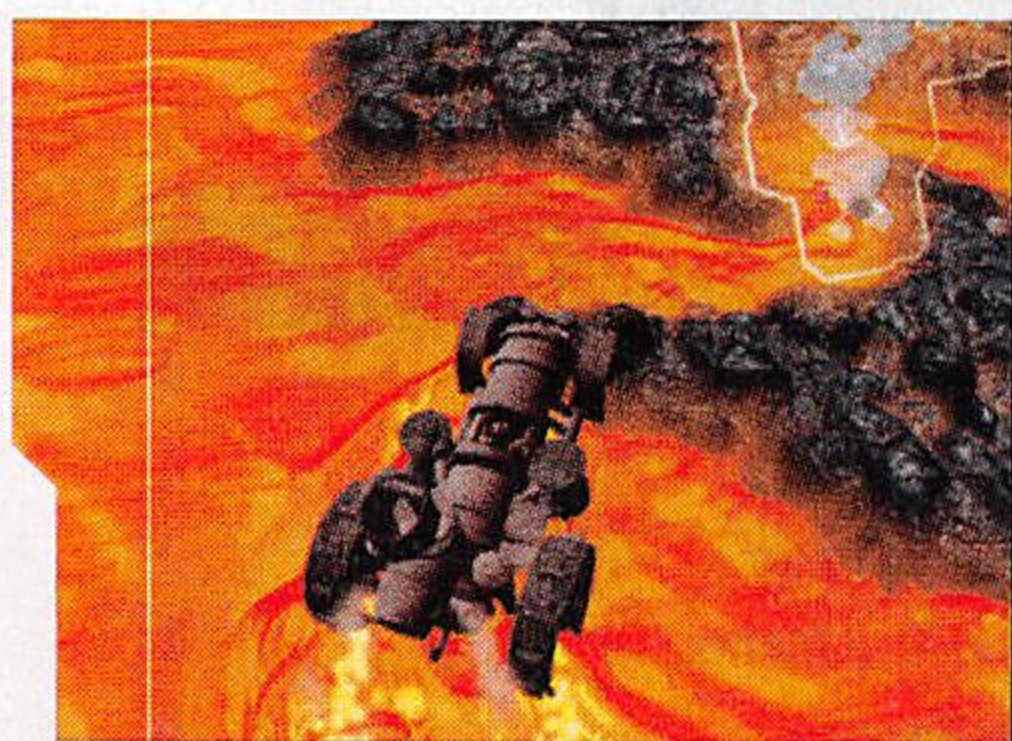
Of course, the name of the publisher is Sony Online, which leads us to the biggest advance of all: if you're surfing with broadband, *Champions of Norrath* can be played online by up to four players. It's a beautiful experience: XP is shared, there's full voice support once you've tuned your headset microphone, and if you die, your comrades can revive you simply by returning to the closest save point. Up to four can play offline as well, though the camera becomes an issue.

Little things = big difference

Champions also boasts countless small touches that lift it above the competition. It's more challenging than most action RPGs. It has a mermaid. NPCs often fight alongside you; they fight poorly, but will kill enemies if given enough time. Cutscenes add to the experience instead of subtracting from it. One mission has you searching for kittens in a dungeon, and another finds



▲ The game has an incredible memory. You can break a barrel of apples, play five levels deeper into the game, and return, and those apples will still be right where they fell.



▲ There's a bit of variety in the game as well. When was the last time you drove a tractor through lava?

HOW IT STACKS UP

<i>Champions Of Norrath</i>	9
<i>Fallout: Brotherhood Of Steel</i>	8
<i>Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II</i>	8
<i>Hunter The Reckoning: Wayward</i>	8
<i>LOTR: The Return Of The King</i>	8

Express Yourself

Champions of Norrath's five classes: ranger, paladin, wizard, dark night, and barbarian, are fairly typical. But you can also customize your character's appearance, choosing a hairstyle, hair color, and skin tone. It's a small step forward, but it's appreciated.

► There are a number of different looks for each character, so you won't look like everyone else when you go online.



you driving a giant tractor through lava. Many levels teem with ambient life: birds, penguins, or frogs, which fly, waddle, and hop about each location, oblivious to your urgent quest.

Speaking of which, the plotline could be meatier. But it progresses well, starting with you simply running a raiding party of goblins out of a tree village, and eventually ratcheting up to a suitably epic, climactic face-off with an actual god. Ultimately, *Champions of Norrath: Realms of EverQuest* is still just an action RPG in the same mold as *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance*, *Diablo II*, or even *Gauntlet*. However, it plays as well as any of those games, and is the PS2's best example yet of not just where the genre has been, but also where it's headed. ERIC BRATCHER

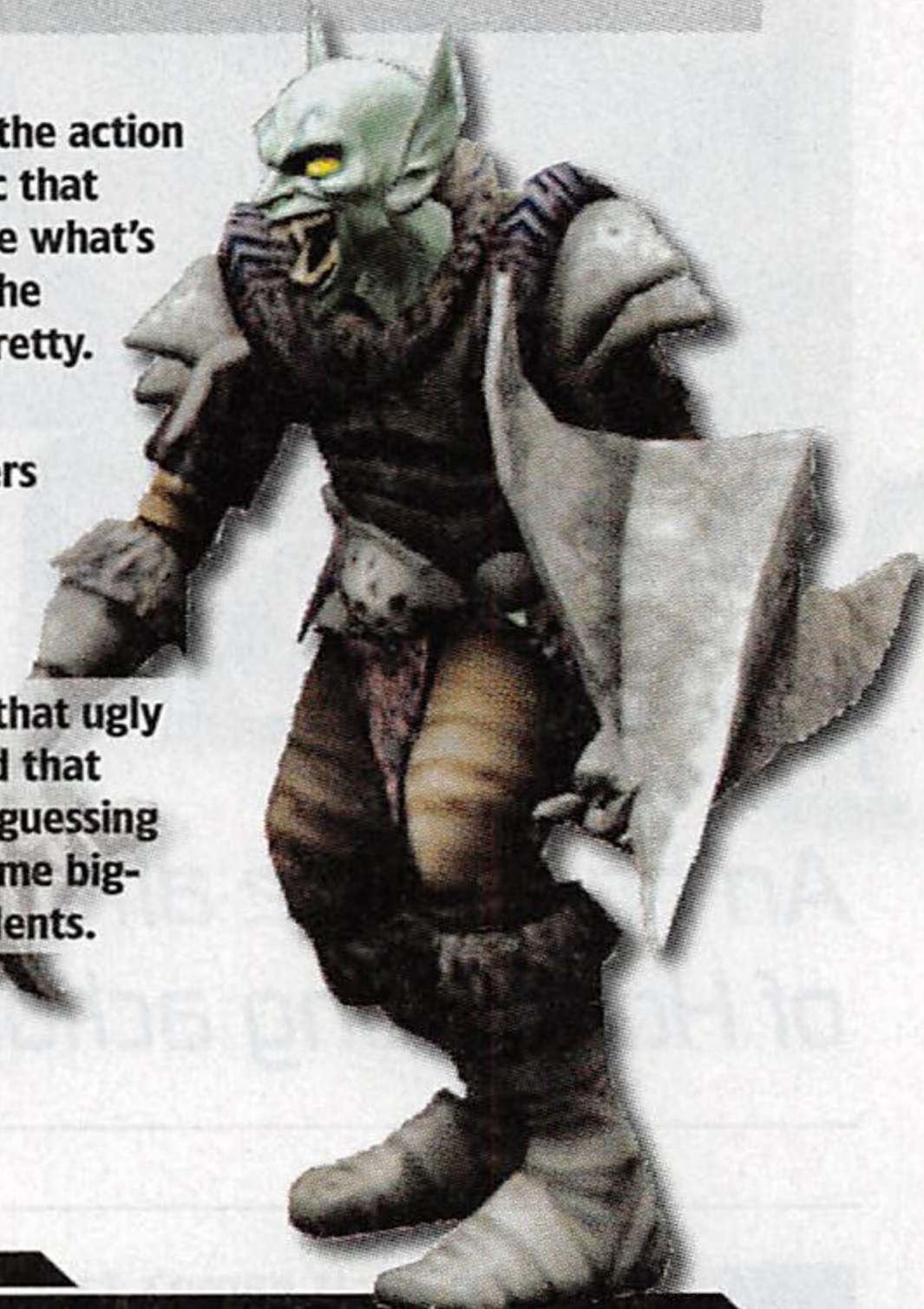


◀ Sometimes, the action gets so frenetic that it's tough to see what's going on, but the chaos sure is pretty.



► ...while others are just plain twisted!

◀ With a face that ugly and a girlfriend that smokin', we're guessing this guy has some big-time hidden talents.



PSM
FINAL SCORE

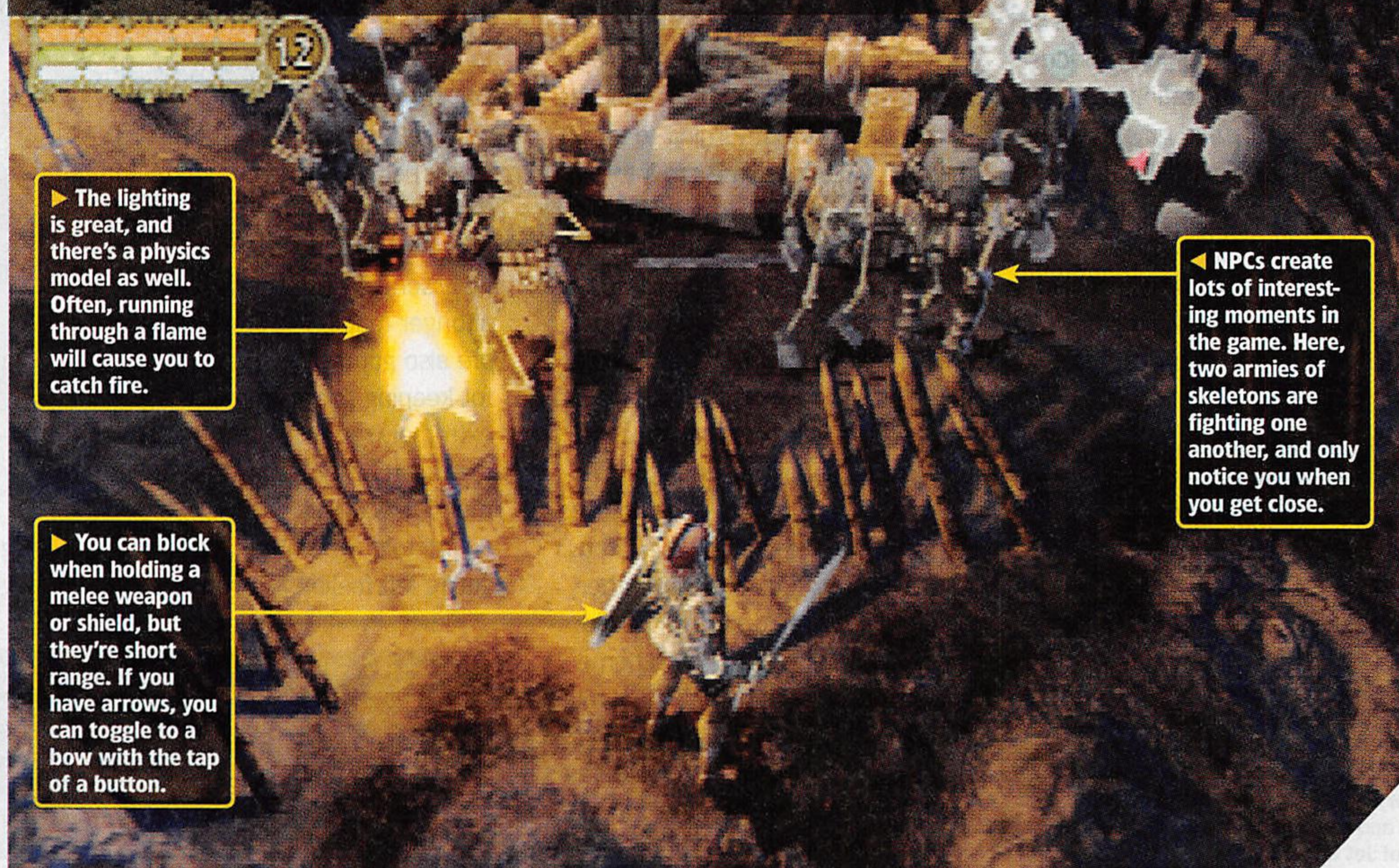
9

OUTSTANDING

It's the prettiest, the deepest, the biggest, and thanks to online play and randomly-generated levels, the most replayable action RPG available today. This game's a champion.

PSM BREAKDOWN

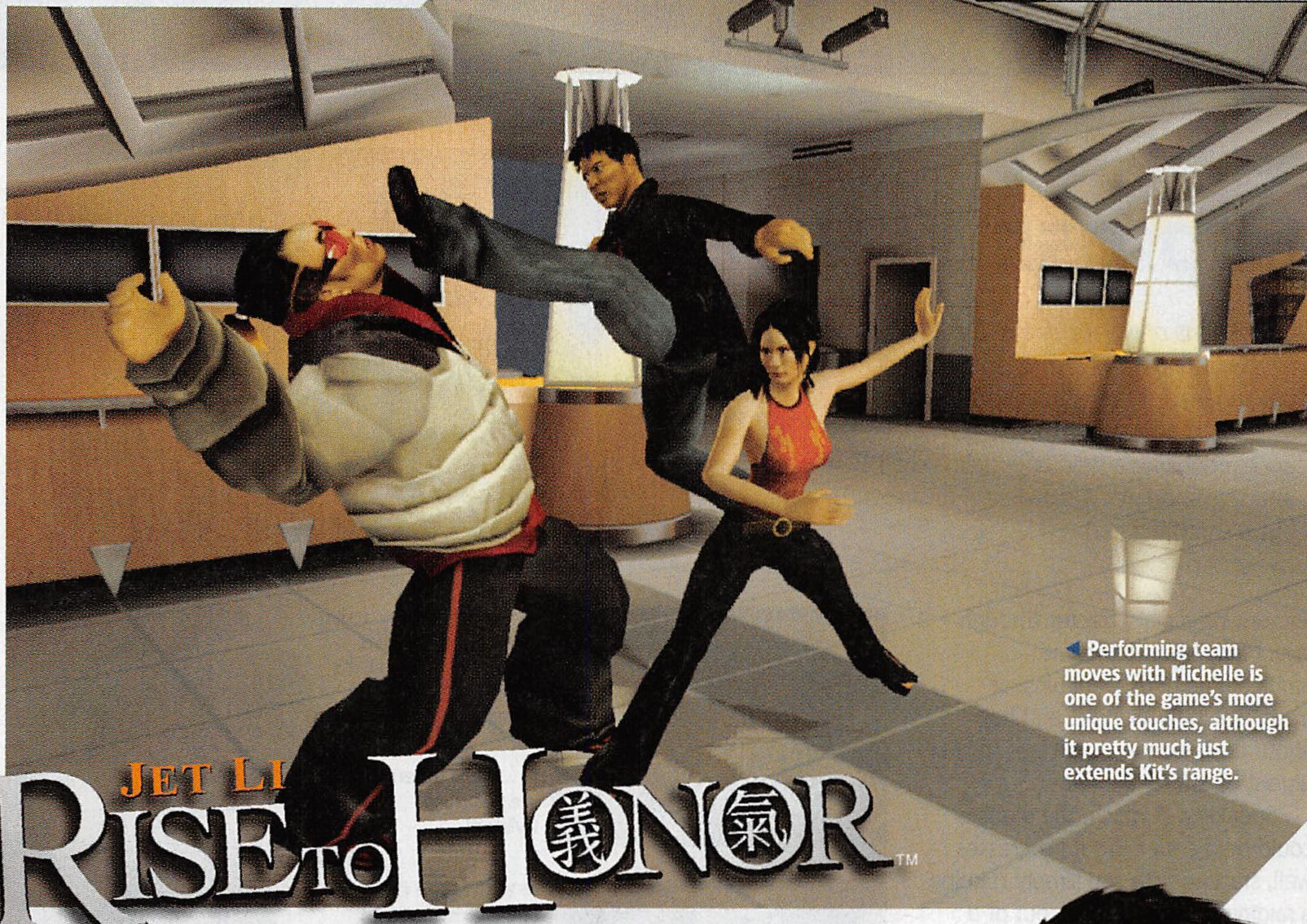
An up-close look at the game in action



► The lighting is great, and there's a physics model as well. Often, running through a flame will cause you to catch fire.

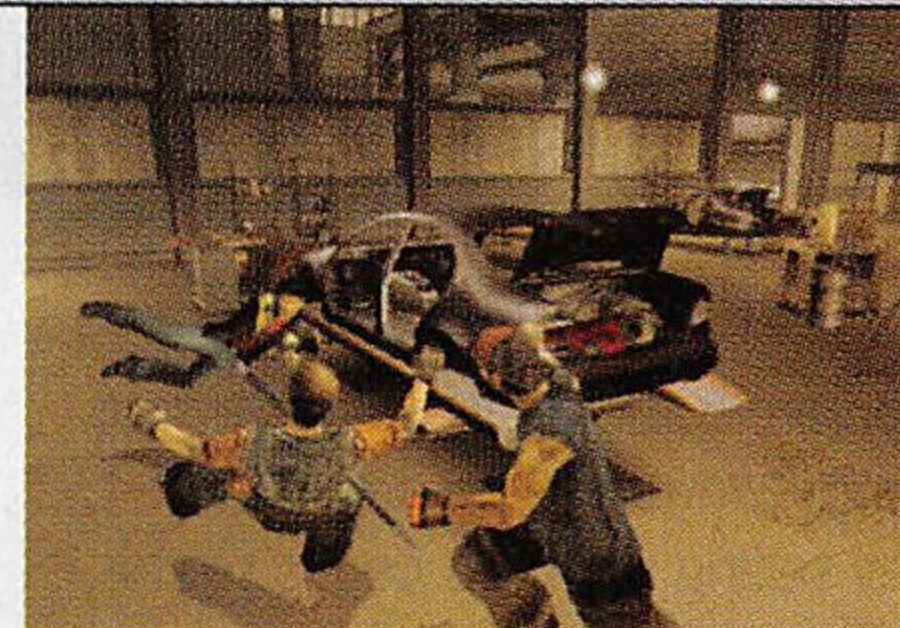
► You can block when holding a melee weapon or shield, but they're short range. If you have arrows, you can toggle to a bow with the tap of a button.

◀ NPCs create lots of interesting moments in the game. Here, two armies of skeletons are fighting one another, and only notice you when you get close.

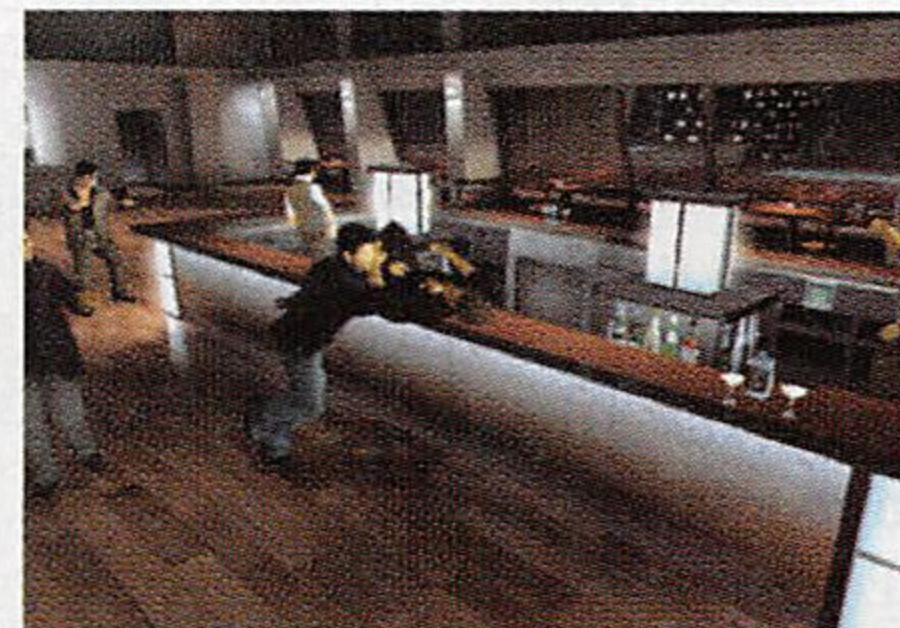


JET LI RISE TO HONOR

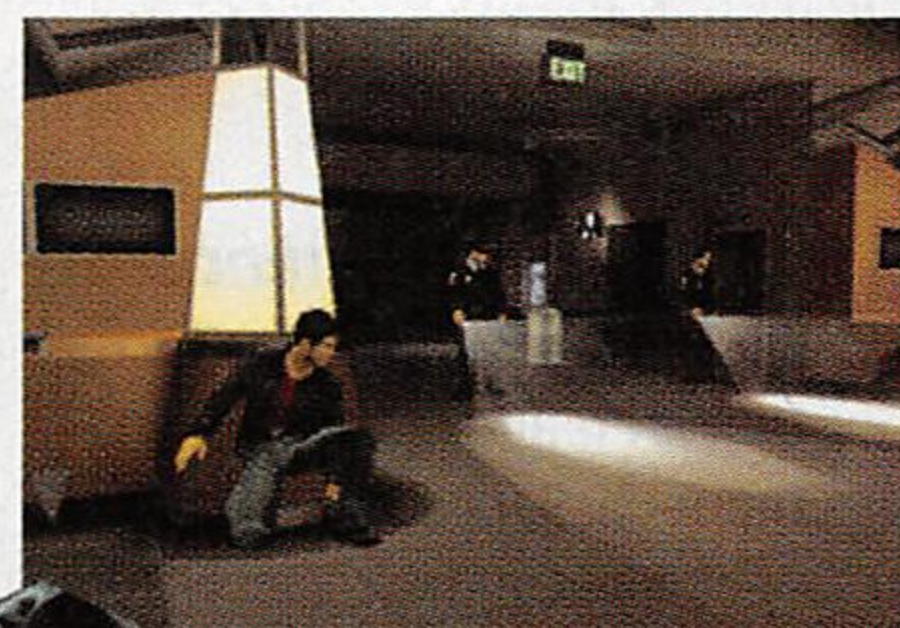
An honorable attempt at combining the worlds of Hong Kong action cinema and videogames



▲ When Kit can't get to traditional guns, he improvises. Kids, don't try this with your dad's nail gun.



▲ The amount of background interaction is great in the beat-'em-up segments.



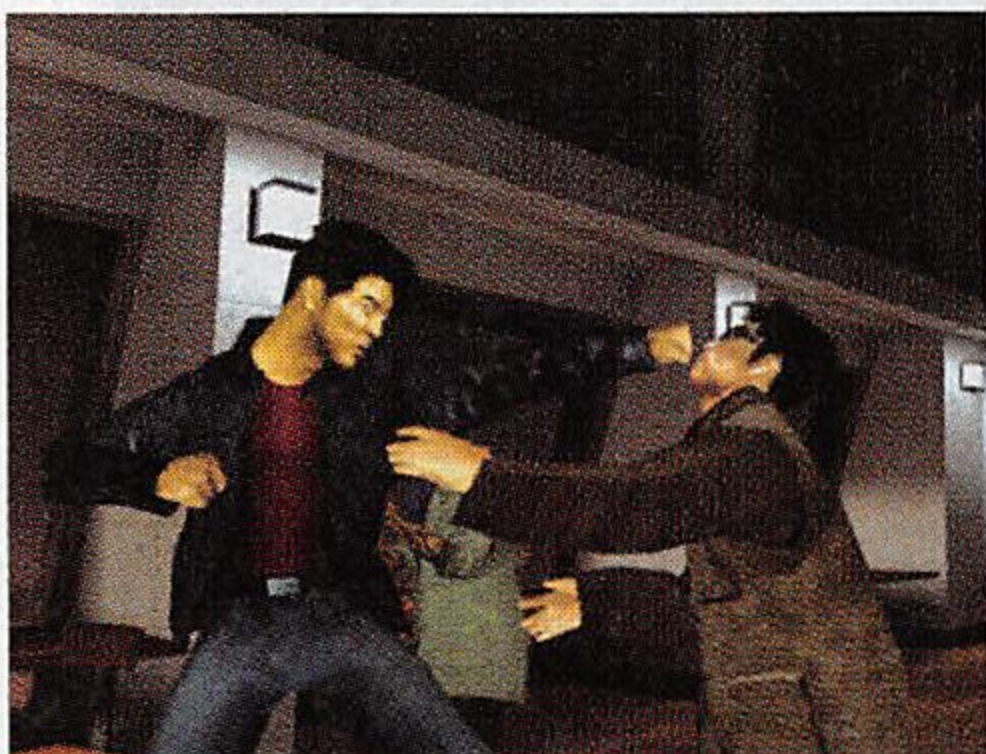
▲ There's something for every type of action gamer: even stealth levels.

▶ Performing team moves with Michelle is one of the game's more unique touches, although it pretty much just extends Kit's range.

Pop quiz: what game's tagline was "Play the action movie"? Give up? It was *The Bouncer*. While that game definitely had a lot

of action movies — as in cutscenes — *Rise To Honor* does a far better job of making you feel like you're actually playing an action movie.

All of the requisite elements are here: furious fistfights, equally furious gunfights, stealthy infiltrations and escapes, despicable bad guys and one very real good guy: martial arts master and action movie legend Jet Li. Li didn't just lend his name and likeness to the game; he was heavily involved in the development, providing countless hours of motion-captured fighting moves.



▲ Every now and again, the game will slow down and zoom in to let you get a better view of Jet Li's prowess.

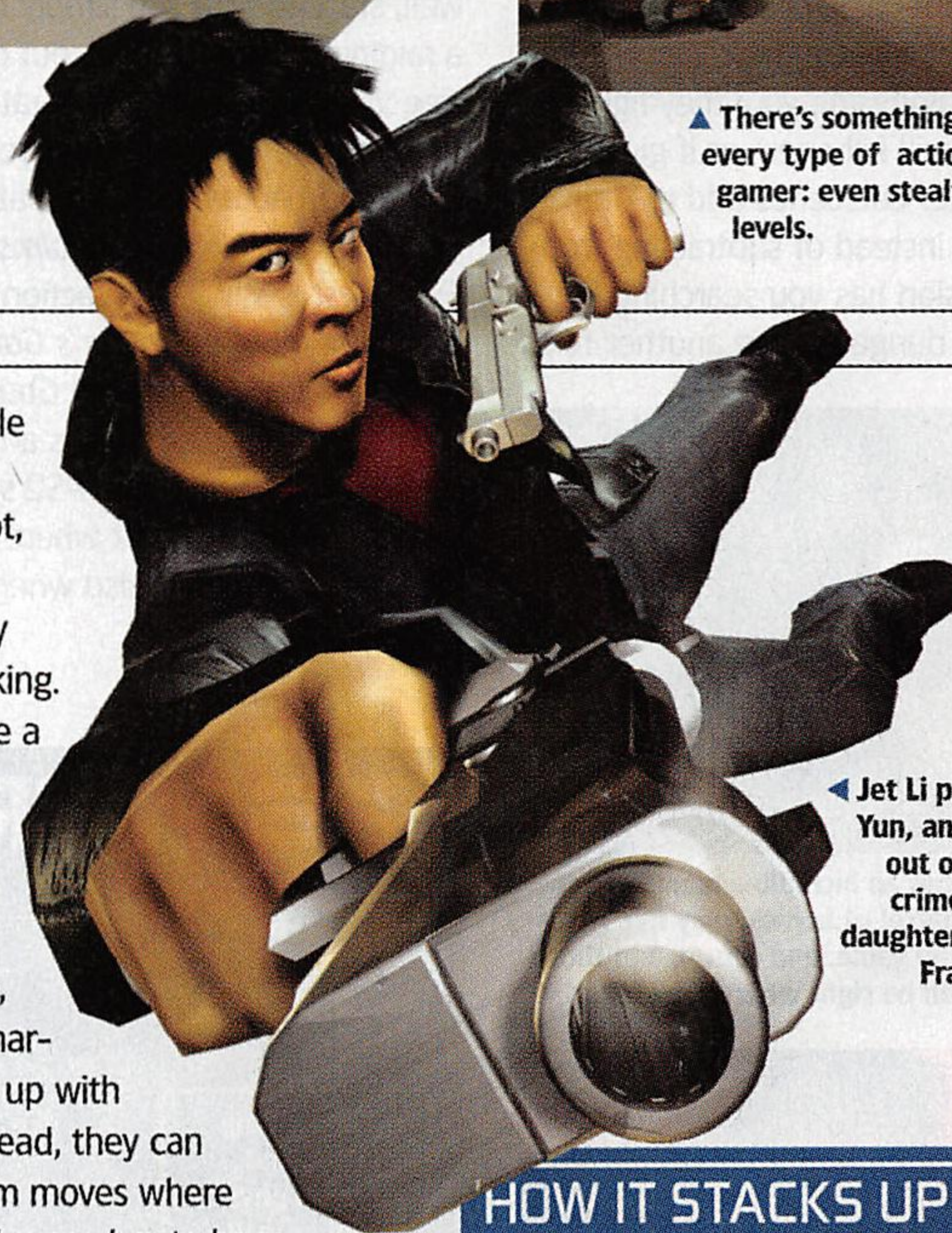
The presentation is everything you'd expect from a movie-style game — lots of segues from cinemas to gameplay and vice-versa, and little touches, such as bonus behind-the-scenes material to unlock.

Okay — it's got the action-movie basics and feature-film polish down, but what about the actual gameplay? Here's where the game both impresses and disappoints. Using the right analog stick, you can attack enemies on all sides without turning to face them. You can smash them into almost anything. You can throw furniture, attack off walls, drag them along bars, and even use broken objects as weapons. Sounds great — and it is at times — but for all the obvious time and effort put into making it look and feel like every best fight scene you've ever seen, it ultimately boils down to "slapping" the stick and seeing Jet Li flail away at enemies; thus, *RTH* is not revolutionary, but rather a different way to do the same old thing. Granted, the control scheme enables a snappiness in fighting multiple enemies we haven't experienced before, which is a nice plus. Gunfights are similar; you can hide behind scenery and pop out to shoot, or dive

slow-mo style through the air and shoot, but it's nothing truly groundbreaking.

There are a lot of great touches in the game, to be sure. For instance, once Jet's character meets up with the female lead, they can execute team moves where he essentially uses her to have a longer reach. The stealth portions are also good for keeping things from getting extremely repetitive, and the environments are really, really detailed, not to mention accurate.

All told: when the credits roll, you're left feeling like you've played a



▶ Jet Li plays Kit Yun, an ex-cop out of find a crime boss's daughter in San Francisco.

HOW IT STACKS UP

LOTR: Return Of The King	8
Dead To Rights	8
Rise To Honor	7
Enter The Matrix	6
The Bouncer	4

good action game, but not the next generation of them. RANDY NELSON

PSM
FINAL SCORE

7

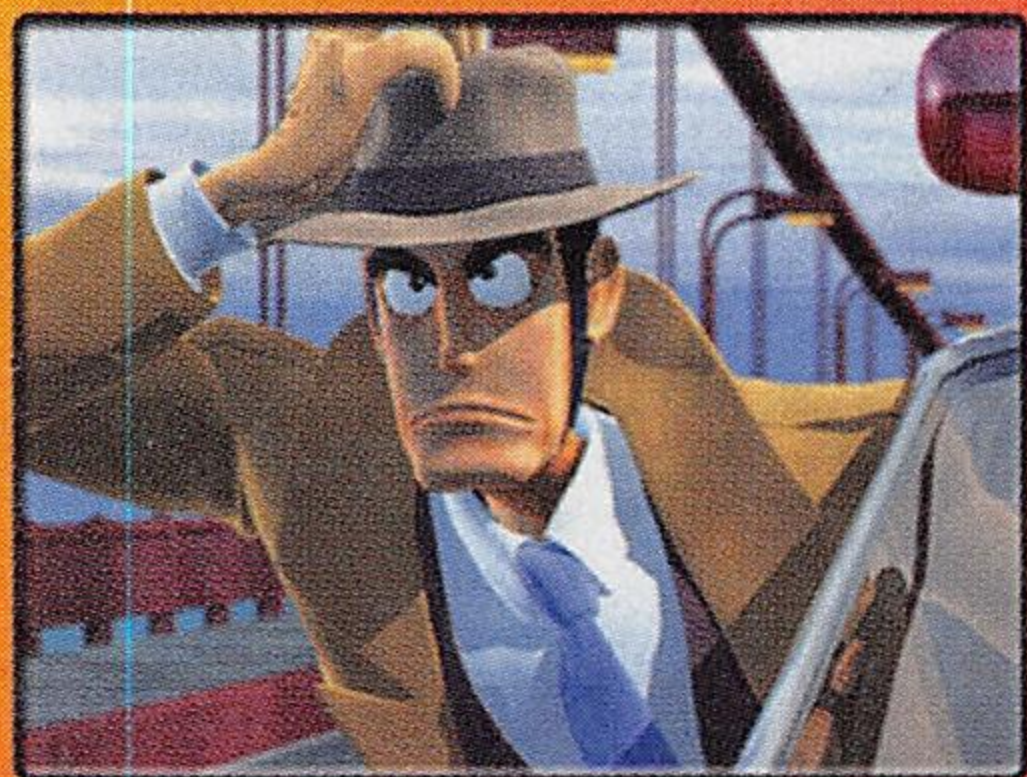
GOOD

Despite an innovative control scheme, this is pretty much your typical action game fare, albeit with better-than-average environmental interaction and storytelling.

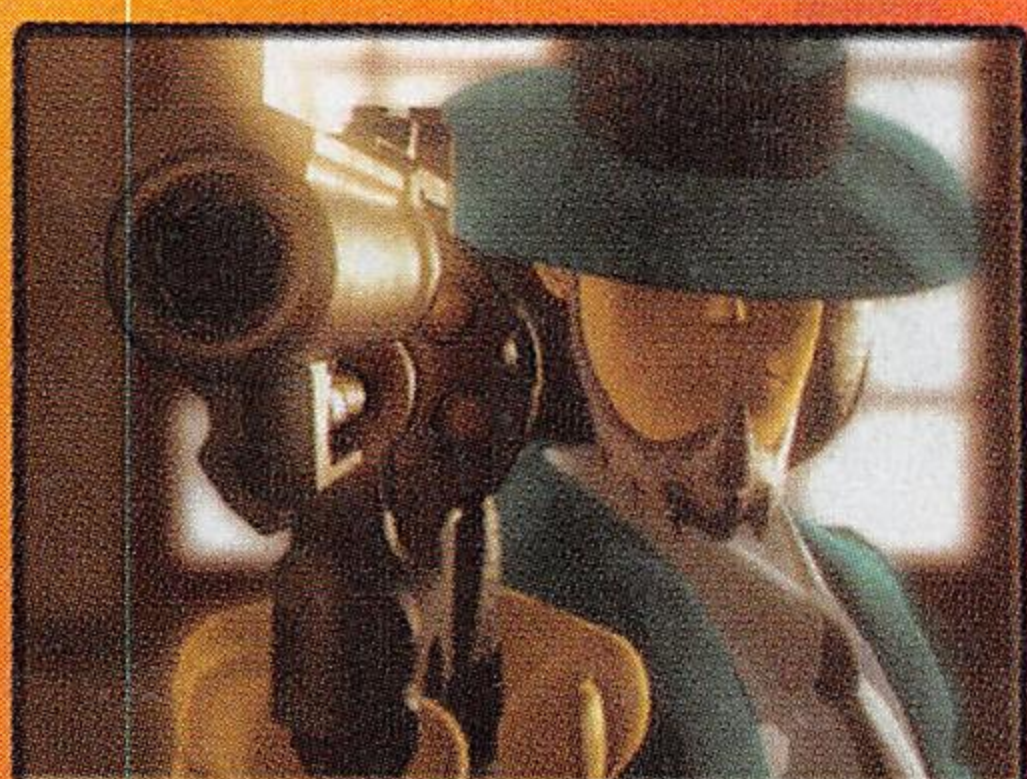
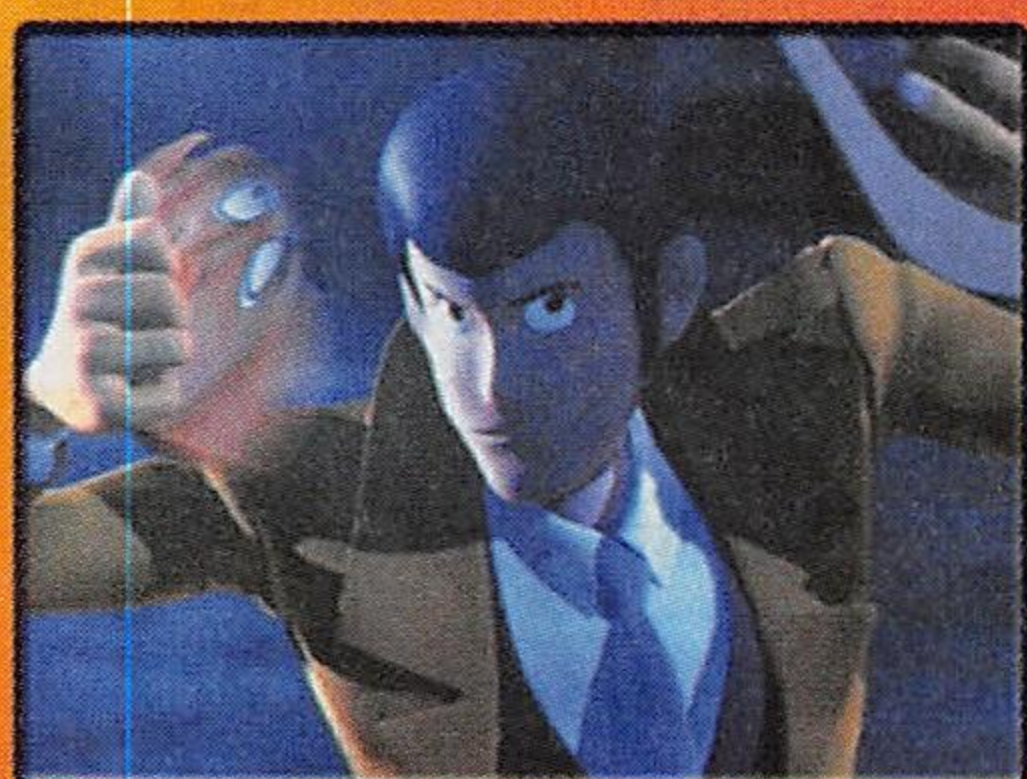
Fantastic heists, impossible escapes, and busty brunettes — all in a day's work for anime's favorite thief.

LUPIN THE 3RD

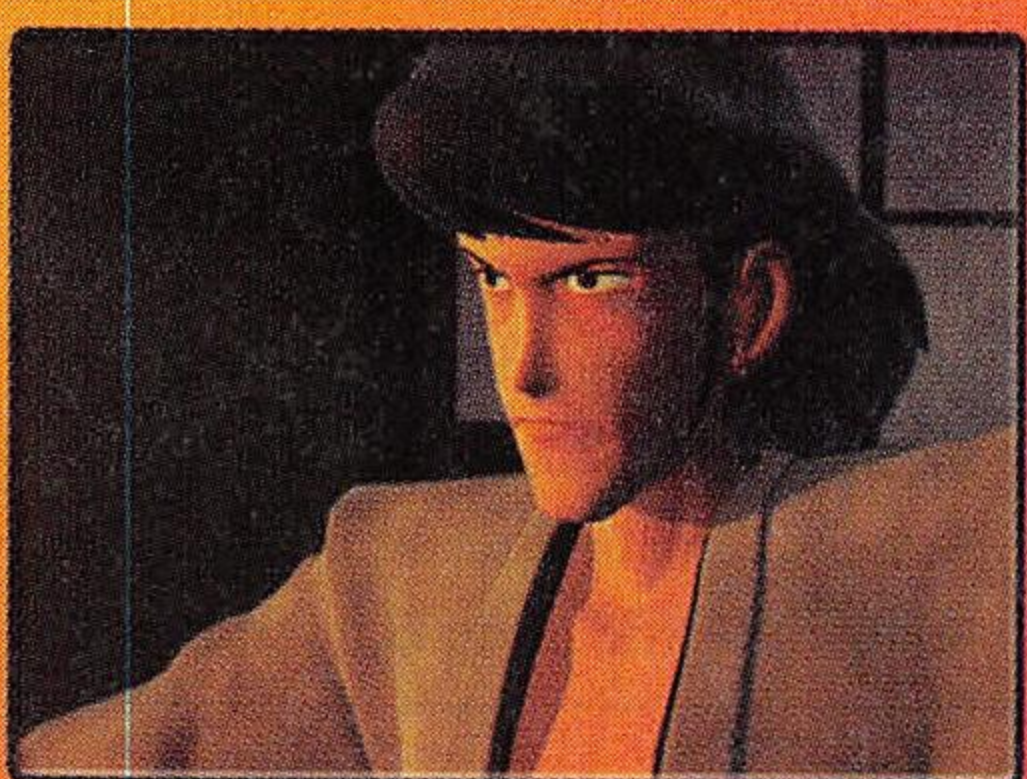
TREASURE OF THE SORCERER KING



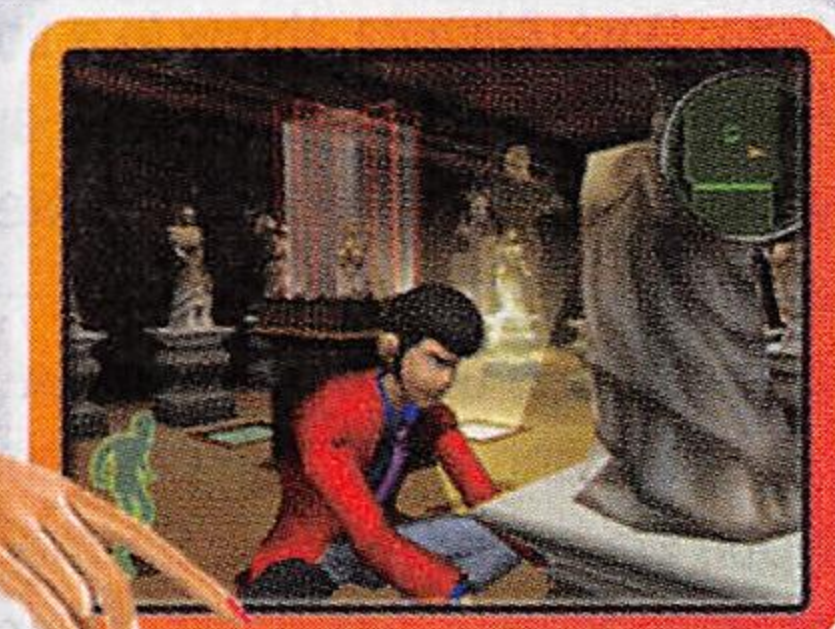
Use disguises and stealth to evade your enemies, especially Interpol Inspector Zenigata.



Play as gun-toting Jigen...



...or the sword wielding samurai, Goemon.

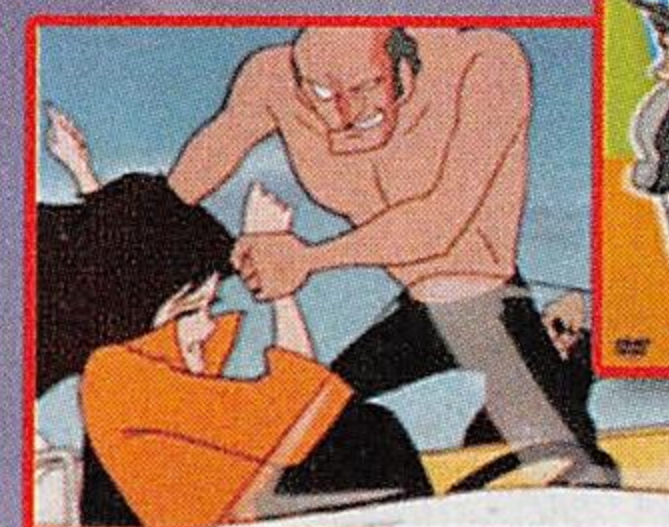


Can you pull off the ultimate heist?

Solve puzzles and gather clues to loot the King's fortune in this cinematic action adventure!

As seen on Cartoon Network's Adult Swim block and available on DVD!

The star of 6 theatrical films, 10 television films and 228 TV episodes, Lupin's outrageous exploits from the hilarious TV series are now available on DVD!



www.bandaigames.com

LUPIN THE 3RD



Mild Language and Violence



LUPIN THE 3RD © Monkey Punch/TMS/NTV. All Rights Reserved. © 2003 BANPRESTO © 2003 BANDAI. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. ADULT SWIM and all related characters and elements are trademarks of and © Cartoon Network (s03)

Pioneer sound.vision.soul

PlayStation®2





▲ See that red outline? That tells you you're locked onto an enemy — one of *FBOS*'s nicer combat features.



▲ Toxic waste disposal is simple in the future — just leave it out on the curb.

Take one of the most popular PC role-playing games of the past decade, combine it with the gameplay of *Baldur's*

Gate: Dark Alliance, throw in a little *Hunter: The Reckoning* to taste, and you end up with one of the better action RPGs in recent memory — and certainly one of the most unique.

Set in and below the post-apocalyptic Wasteland, *Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel* doesn't look nearly as good as other games based on the same engine, but it more than makes up for this fact in gameplay and personality. Building on the combat system in *Dark Alliance*, the game allows you to lock onto enemies (although it'd be nice if it didn't auto-switch to the nearest enemy at all times) and perform evasive rolls and flips while doing so, giving you much more control over your character. Unlike the *BGDA* games, however, you're locked into one pulled-back camera position; it would have been really nice to zoom in closer to see the damage you're dishing out in more detail.

Fallout: BOS really shines in its



► The Wasteland is full of brain-fried bandits just asking to be shot, and you've got lots of interesting weapons with which to do it.

FALLOUT: BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL

Nuclear war ain't pretty, but surviving its aftermath is a blast!

► Nadia, one of the three playable characters, is hot — and we don't mean radioactive.

character customization and interaction with other characters. Unlike the PC games, where you basically built your character from the ground up, *FBOS* provides you with three starting characters and then lets you use experience points to increase their prowess in a staggering number of categories. This gives players unprecedented control over what their character will ultimately become. The melee and ranged weapons are equally numerous and varied, with armor and explosives rounding out the upgrades.

The storyline and dialog are great *Mad Max*-ish fare, and definitely not for the kids. Any game with two-headed mutant cows can't take itself too seriously, and that's a good thing — the dialog, NPCs, and situations are all darkly humorous and very memorable. It's a great game universe.

Luckily, you can share it with a friend — and not just in a "watch me do this!" way. *FBOS* has a two-player co-op mode that makes taking on the radioactive monstrosities of The Wasteland more fun, but also introduces a bit of competition as you both go after the spoils of your victories.

So if you've been longing for a good action RPG, and would like to take on something other than skeletons and dragons for a change, *FBOS*



▲ You'll start out with simple pistols, but that doesn't mean you can't upgrade to some heavy-duty firepower later.

HOW IT STACKS UP

Champions Of Norrath	9
Fallout: Brotherhood Of Steel	8
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II	8
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance	8
Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward	8

is a great choice. Who knew that the apocalypse could be a good thing?

RANDY NELSON



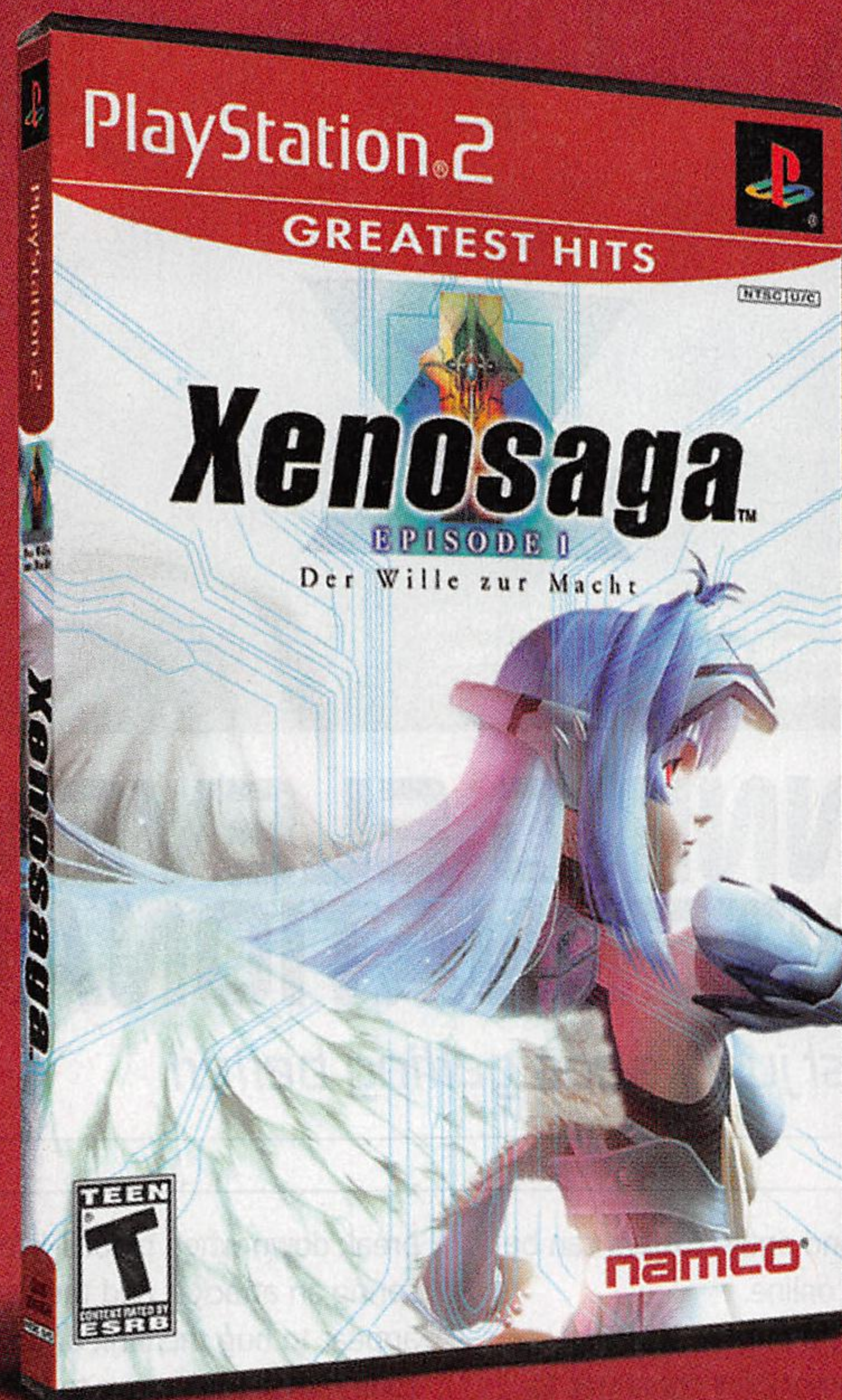
► Not all of the action takes place on the radiation-scathed surface, and not all of the enemies are mutants.

PSM 8 **VERY GOOD**
A surprisingly deep, well-written, and entertaining action RPG that offers lots of customization, co-op play, and a great game universe.

EPIC REVIEWS. EPIC SAGA. EPIC HIT.

"...an interstellar otherspace opus
of the most magnificent kind..."
~GamePro, 4.5 out of 5

"...one of the coolest stories
you'll encounter..."
~Official PlayStation Magazine, 4 out of 5



"...Xenosaga is to video games as
the original Star Wars is to movies."
~GMR, 9 out of 10

"Xenosaga is truly a triple-A title..."
~Game Informer, 9.75 out of 10

"Calling this game epic would be
an understatement."
~IGN

namco-xenosaga.com

PlayStation®2 Greatest Hits edition available now. ONLY **\$19⁹⁵**



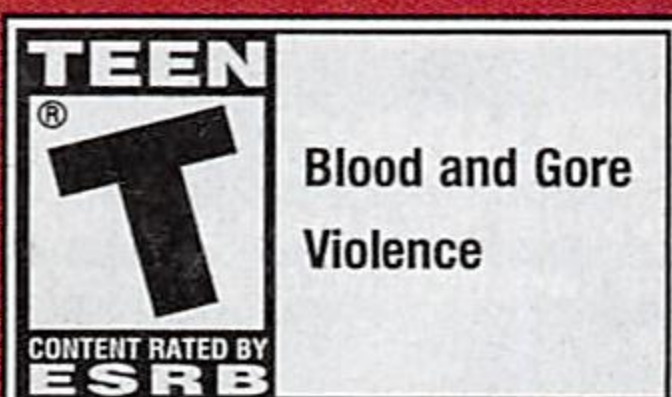
Plunge into a massive adventure as you battle
against a brutal alien race across the universe.



Take on 80 hours of gameplay using
innovative battle and control systems.



Absorb stunning graphics, awesome cinematics
and beautifully rendered 3D environments.



PlayStation®2



▲ There are nearly 30 stats and abilities tracked for each player, from stamina to header and short pass accuracy.



▲ The more up-close camera views such as this are better looking, but zooming out will give you a better field of vision.



▲ Scoring goals requires accurate shooting — precision button-pressing and curl controlling. Hours spent on the training ground will pay off on the field.

This may be a bold statement, but a soccer game like *Winning Eleven 7 International* could really help the American gaming public to a greater appreciation and understanding of “the world’s game”. Really.

Konami has crafted a superbly playable soccer sim with enough arcade stylings to be accessible to all, and the depth to delight soccer purists. It’s a tough balancing act expertly executed.

Building on last year’s iteration, the biggest overhaul has been to the menu system. Partly a victim of its own mammoth slew of options, navigating pages of details on each of the 60 teams and their players can be a trial of patience and error. At least now there’s some order, though making substitutions mid-game still requires at least one level of menu-diving that it shouldn’t.

In addition, the realism of the uncensored teams and players — whom Konami can recreate almost exactly, but is obligated to misname — has been streamlined, so it’s easier to tell who is a renamed clone of whom. All these names can be easily edited (i.e.:



▲ Okay, so soccer isn’t quite as popular as the NFL in the U.S. This is still a stunningly deep and wonderful game.

WINNING ELEVEN 7 INTERNATIONAL

The best just keeps getting better!

PSM
MUST-BUY
SILVER

ONLINE
COMPATIBLE

corrected), and entire rosters can be downloaded online.

On the field of play, *Winning Eleven 7 International* continues to shine. Improvements over last year’s phenomenal game are mainly cosmetic, with player likenesses improved significantly, new animations added, and a greater fluidity to the action that ultimately makes many of the passing moves look like you’re watching TV highlights.

The five difficulty levels provide plenty of challenge, though they make players faster, stronger and more accurate for the most part rather than more tactically aware. Just like last year, defensive coverage can

break down when pinball-like passes spring an attacker and the defenders appear to hug the limit of an invisible zone rather than move to the ball.

Just as I was beginning to think that the vital on-field portion hadn’t made the advances I would have hoped, I pieced together a short corner kick move leading to a cross and a spectacular bicycle kick volley to score a priceless goal. I watched it about eight times, made the wife watch it, saved it, watched it again, and I’ll keep it forever. It was a sensational moment that inspired me to produce more.

Between the deep formations and tactics, a management portion that allows player purchases and trades, commentary that can be toggled to favor the home or away team or be neutral, and everything else, *Winning Eleven 7 International* crams in as

much sporting content as any soccer fan could hope for. **ROB SMITH**



▲ Quick-paced passing is the key to opening defenses and creating goal-scoring chances.

HOW IT STACKS UP

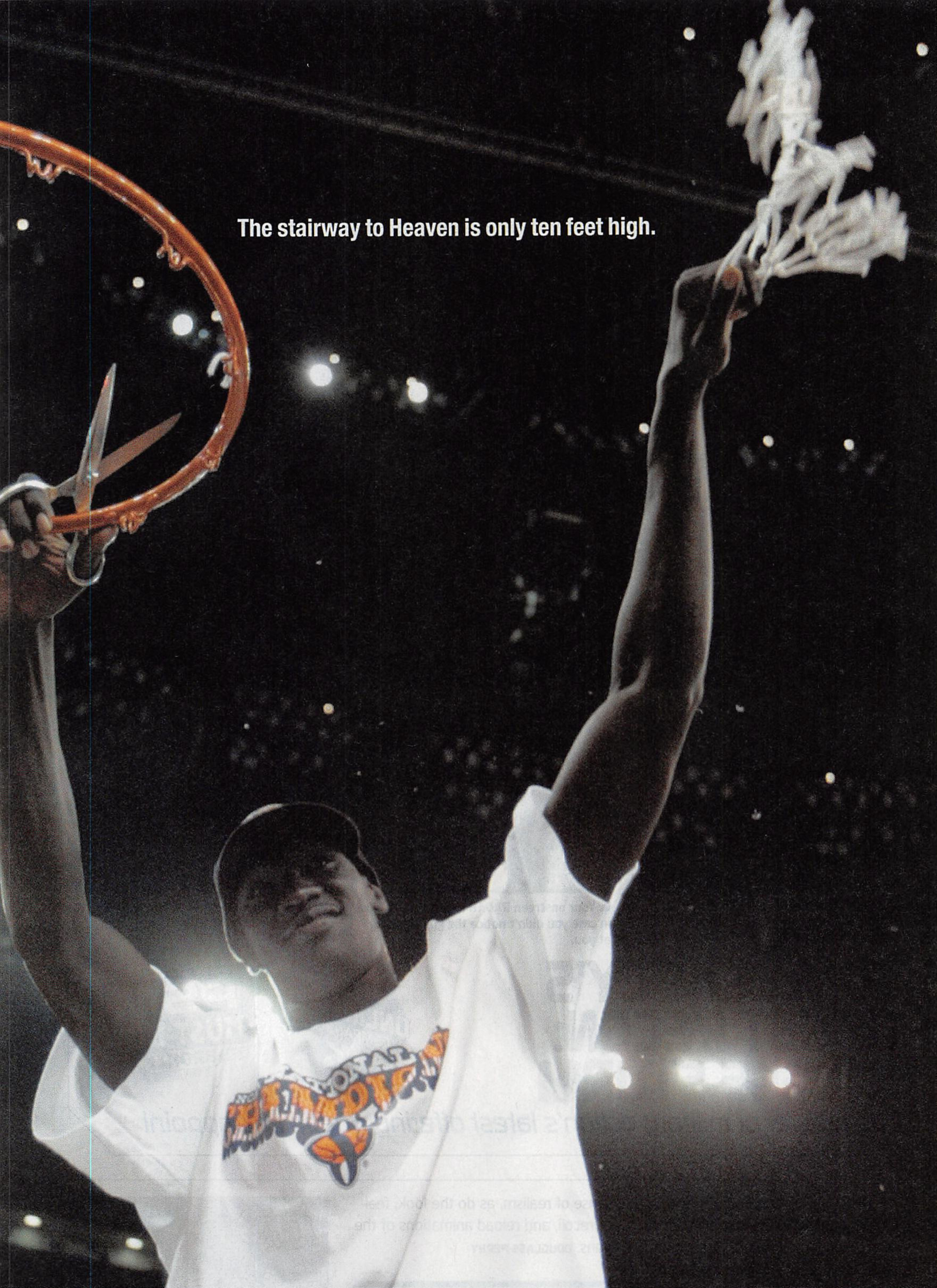
Winning Eleven 7	9
Winning Eleven 6	9
FIFA Soccer 2004	8
FIFA Soccer 2003	8
World Tour Soccer 2003	8



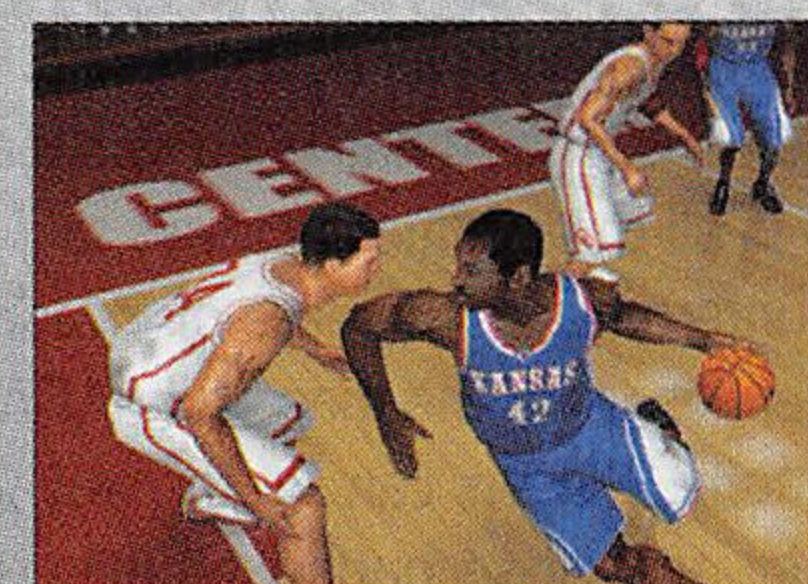
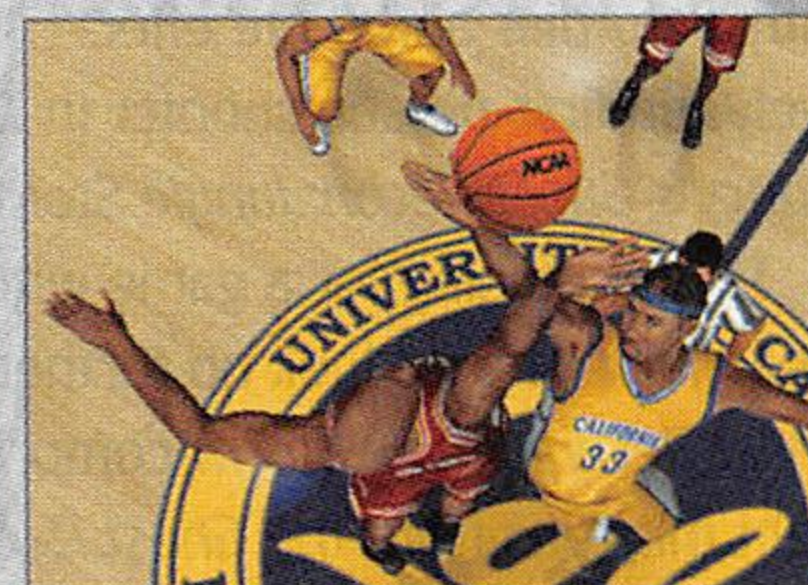
▲ You can’t play online, but you /can/ download customized rosters. For example, those that have the players correctly renamed.

PSM
FINAL SCORE

9
OUTSTANDING
EA’s *FIFA* series had a great year, but this is still the sweetest soccer game on any platform.



The stairway to Heaven is only ten feet high.



www.989SPORTS.com

Don't cut down the nets just yet. March might be just a few upsets away, but you can still get in on the action. Extend the season and play NCAA® Final Four® 2004 online, where a new 65-team tournament is always just starting up. Newly improved, ultra-responsive controls let you tap into an arsenal of sick moves. But just because you got some moves doesn't mean you got enough game. This is the Big Dance® we're talking about, and you can't buy your way in. You gotta earn it.



PlayStation®2



The "Officially Licensed Collegiate Products" label is the exclusive property of The Collegiate Licensing Company. The "Collegiate Licensed Product" label is the property of the Independent Labeling Group. All names, logos, teams icons and mascots associated with the NCAA, universities and conferences are the exclusive property of the respective institutions. Designed and developed by Killer Game. ©2003 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. 989 Sports and the 989 Sports logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for the PlayStation 2 (sold separately).

After an innocuous start on PlayStation 2 with the gutless *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon* last year, Ubisoft has returned

with a sturdier and more effectively fun first-person shooter in *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm*.

Players itching for a game with great value should look no further. *Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm* comprises eight missions from the *Ghost Recon* package plus eight from *Jungle Storm*, a robust online experience and the value-added two-person cooperative modes, replete with four styles of on- or off-line play.

The single player game is surprisingly deep. And compared to *SOCOM: US Navy SEALs II*, Ubisoft's single-player game comes up aces. The long-distance gunplay happens over vast environments and requires a different kind of skill set than Ubisoft's other tactical shooter, *Rainbow Six 3*. Using stealth and camouflage to progress through the standard set of mission types (infiltrate and rescue, eliminate all targets, etc.), the skilled *Tom Clancy* vet will notice several slick additions. The AI has been ratcheted up in all three difficulty levels to counterbalance the ease of locating enemies using the map and RADAR systems. Players can set the waypoint of their secondary team in real time (without using menus), and the ability to control any of your team members gives the game a hint of specialization. Admittedly, switching team members was awkward, and the weapon types and skill set of each individual soldier isn't terribly varied, but they work well enough.

Online players have more than a healthy set of modes and terrain in which to run, gun, and get their snipe on. There are cooperative, team and single player modes, while the level designs provide heaps of replay value. There are 31 online maps, as well as nearly 160 voice commands issued using the USB headset. Most levels are wide open in design, while the narrower hilly regions provide distinct shortcuts and secret passages. Relative to the single-player game, the online experience doesn't slow down or hiccup significantly, and the intense battles only grow better as players learn the terrain.

► The mission types vary greatly, but there are often poor, unarmed hostages to rescue.



Having not one, but two separate teams of soldiers to command gives you extra tactical maneuverability.



▲ While the game itself isn't terribly beautiful, it does offer nice lighting and tropical environments.



▲ Your onscreen RADAR shows threats, just in case you didn't notice the guy shooting at you.



▲ Much of the action here is long range — bring your sniper rifle.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: JUNGLE STORM

The master of military action's latest offering doesn't disappoint



The plain-looking swamps and jungles and clunky enemy animations aren't going to bowl over graphic tarts, but the level of gear detail on each team member should keep cynics relatively in check. The heavy use of sniping scopes provides an exciting

sense of realism, as do the look, feel of recoil, and reload animations of the guns. DOUGLASS PERRY

HOW IT STACKS UP

SOCOM II	10
Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm	8
SOCOM	8
S.W.A.T. Global Strike Force	8
Ghost Recon	5



▲ Lying flat (indicated by the figure on your HUD on the right) is an excellent way to sneak up on the enemy, but be careful — they can do the same.

PSM
FINAL SCORE

8

VERY GOOD

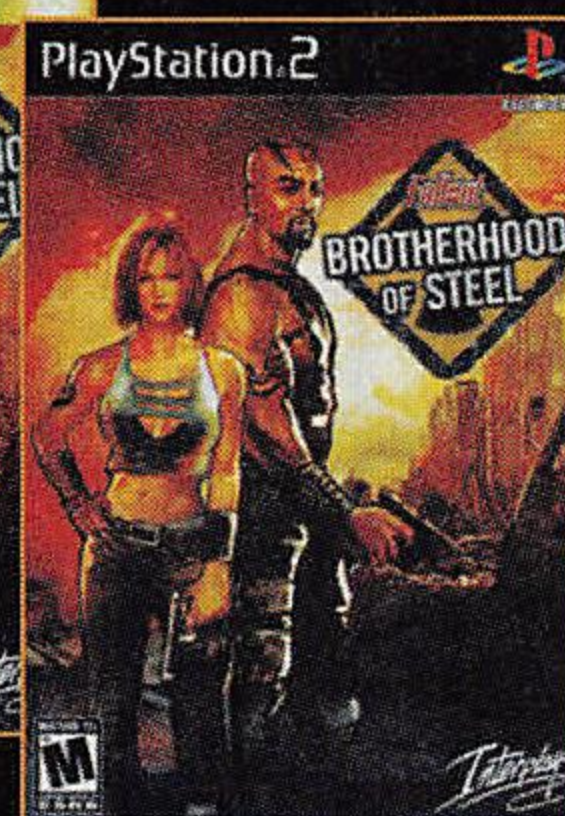
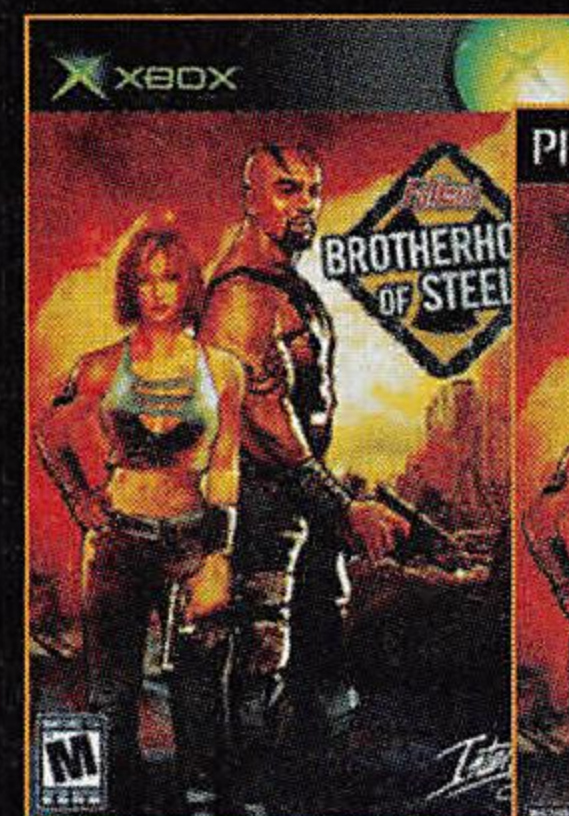
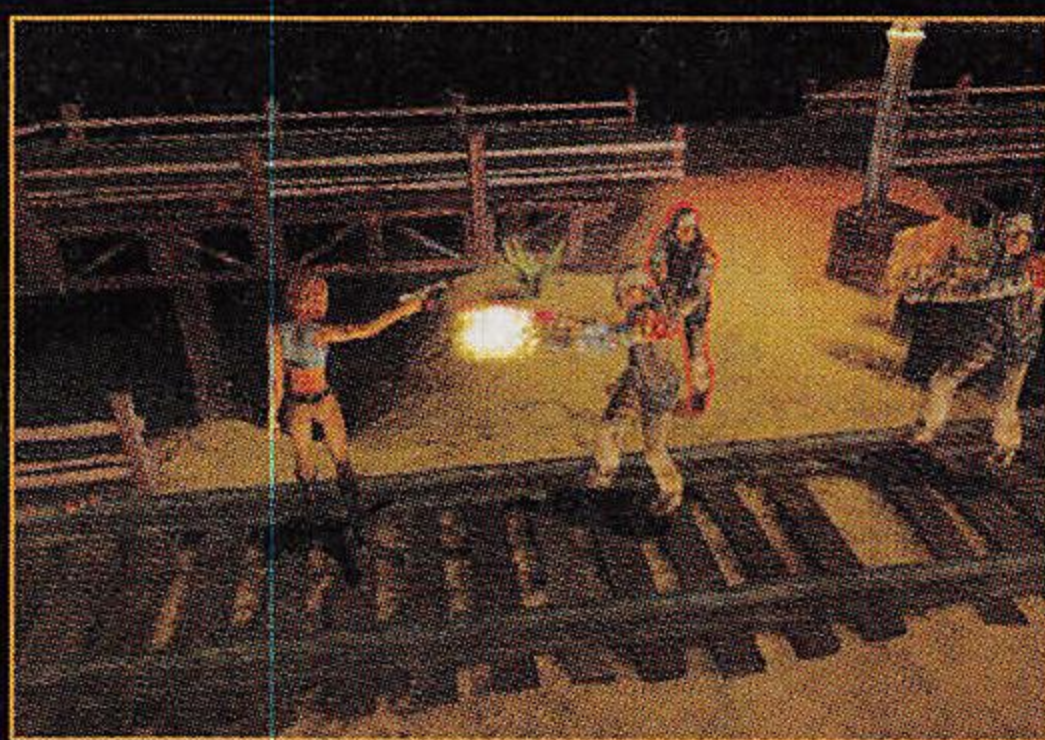
The title may be a mouthful, but *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm* is a good online counterpart to *SOCOM* and a superlative single-player experience.

HAMMER. DYNAMITE. ROCKET LAUNCHER.

Just a few tools to help rebuild society.

Fallout BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL

WELCOME TO THE WASTELAND.



Humanity struggles to pick up the pieces after a devastating nuclear war. As a courageous member of the Brotherhood of Steel, your mission is to bring peace to this post-apocalyptic world filled with relentless chaos and radioactive nightmares.



Blood and Gore
Mature Sexual Themes
Strong Language
Violence



PlayStation®2





WORLD

Diplomacy Is Primary Weapon in America's Quest to End Indonesian Crisis.

By Eric C. Baldwin
GLOBAL PRESS NETWORK

Indonesia - A government...
inter...

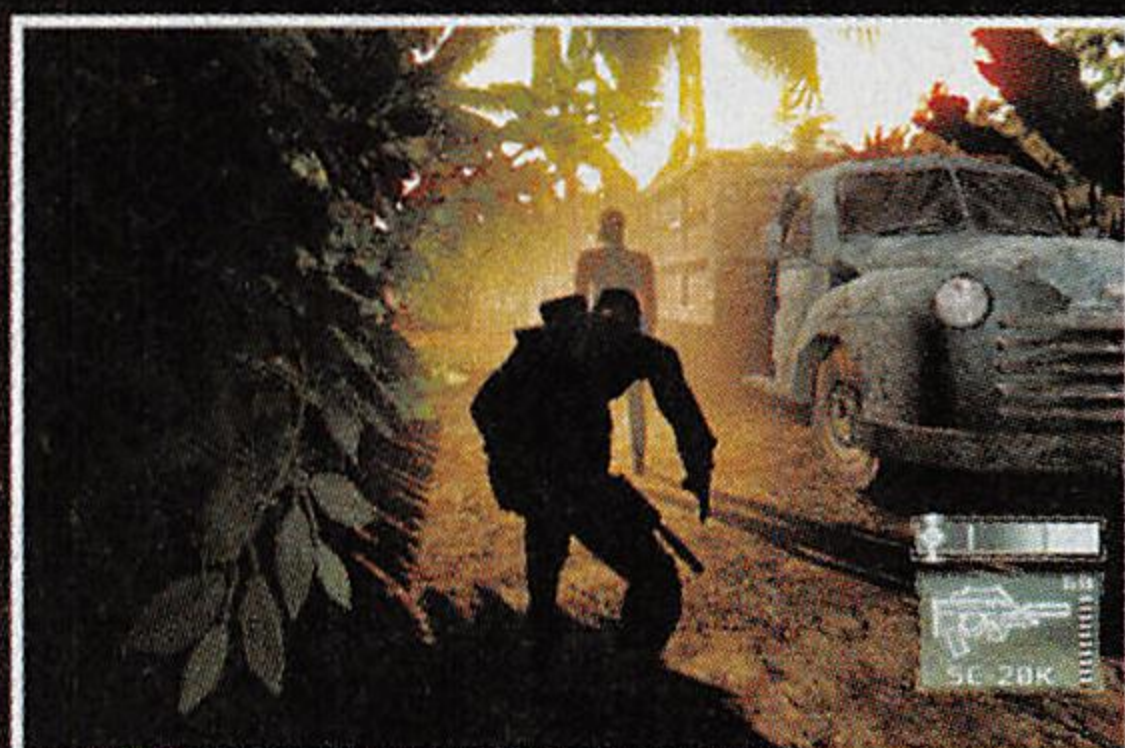
was relieved...

at turn is...



FREEDOM ISN'T FREE

THE NEW DAWN OF STEALTH ACTION



NEW TOM CLANCY INTRIGUE



NEW STEALTH
WEAPONS AND TACTICS



REVOLUTIONARY
MULTIPLAYER GAMEPLAY

YOU ARE SAM FISHER, A DEADLY SPLINTER CELL OPERATIVE WAGING A ONE-MAN WAR AGAINST AN INDONESIAN TERRORIST NETWORK. YOU ALONE HAVE THE FIFTH FREEDOM - THE RIGHT TO ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVES BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.

WWW.SPLINTERCELL.COM



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information.

CELL PHONE VERSION AT

gameloft.com

© 2004 Ubisoft Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Splinter Cell, Sam Fisher, Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow, the Soldier Icon, Ubisoft, ubi.com, and the Ubisoft logo are trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. © 2002 Gameloft. All Rights Reserved. Gameloft and the Gameloft logo are registered trademarks of Gameloft S.A.

"UNIQUE AND WILDLY AMBITIOUS."
ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

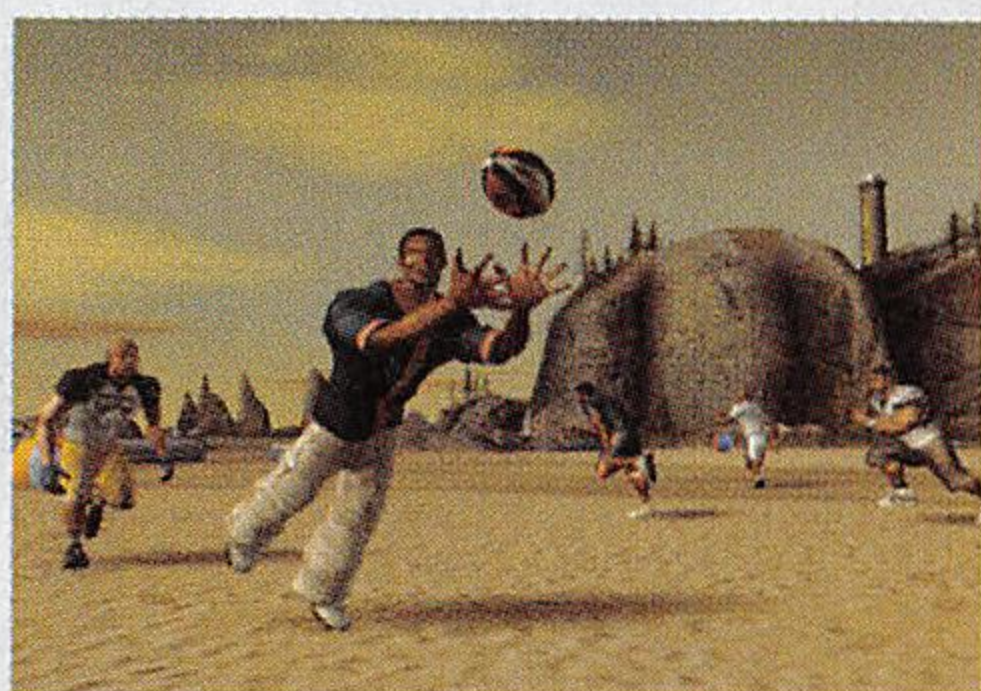
"...REVOLUTIONARY ONLINE-MULTIPLAYER ACTION."
GMR

Tom Clancy's
**SPLINTER
CELL**
PANDORA TOMORROW™

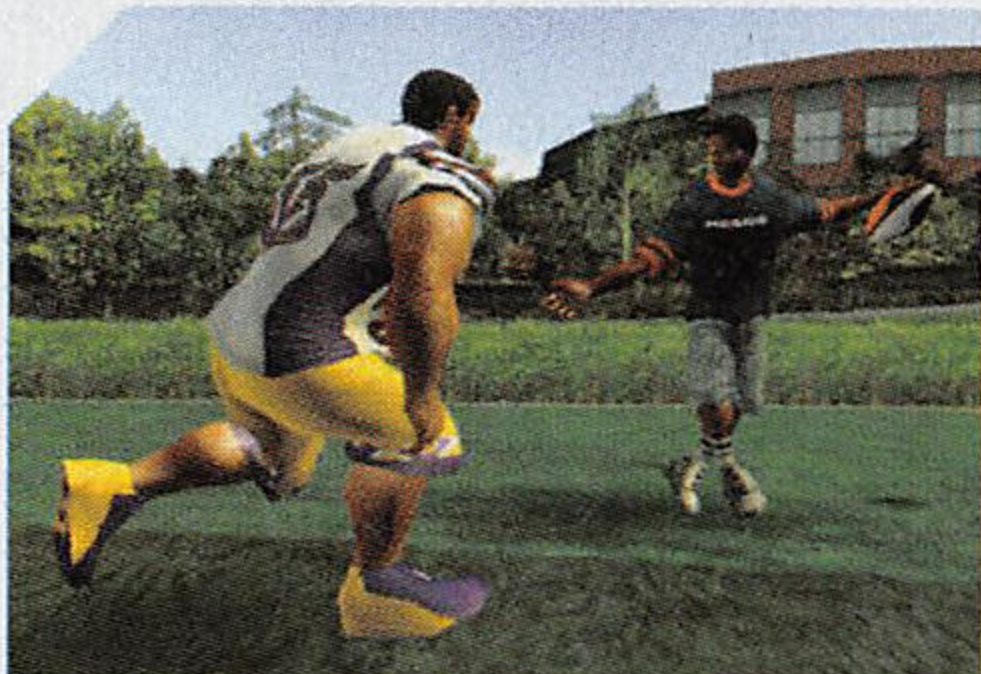
COMING SOON TO ALL
NEXT-GENERATION CONSOLES.



UBISOFT™



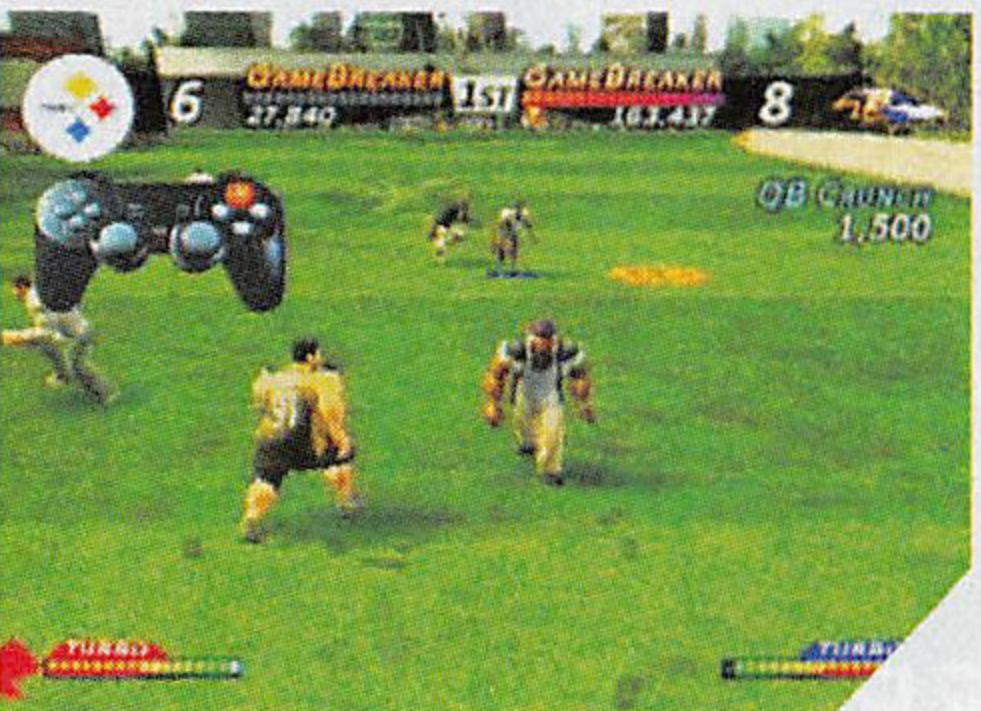
▲ Not all of the playing fields are typical. Last time we saw football played in the sand, it was pay-per-view and the contestants all wore bikinis.



▲ Football players are pretty big guys in real life, but the athletes in *NFL Street* are straight-up hulking.



▲ Penalties? Never heard of 'em. Out here on the streets... of finely manicured turf... things get rough sometimes.

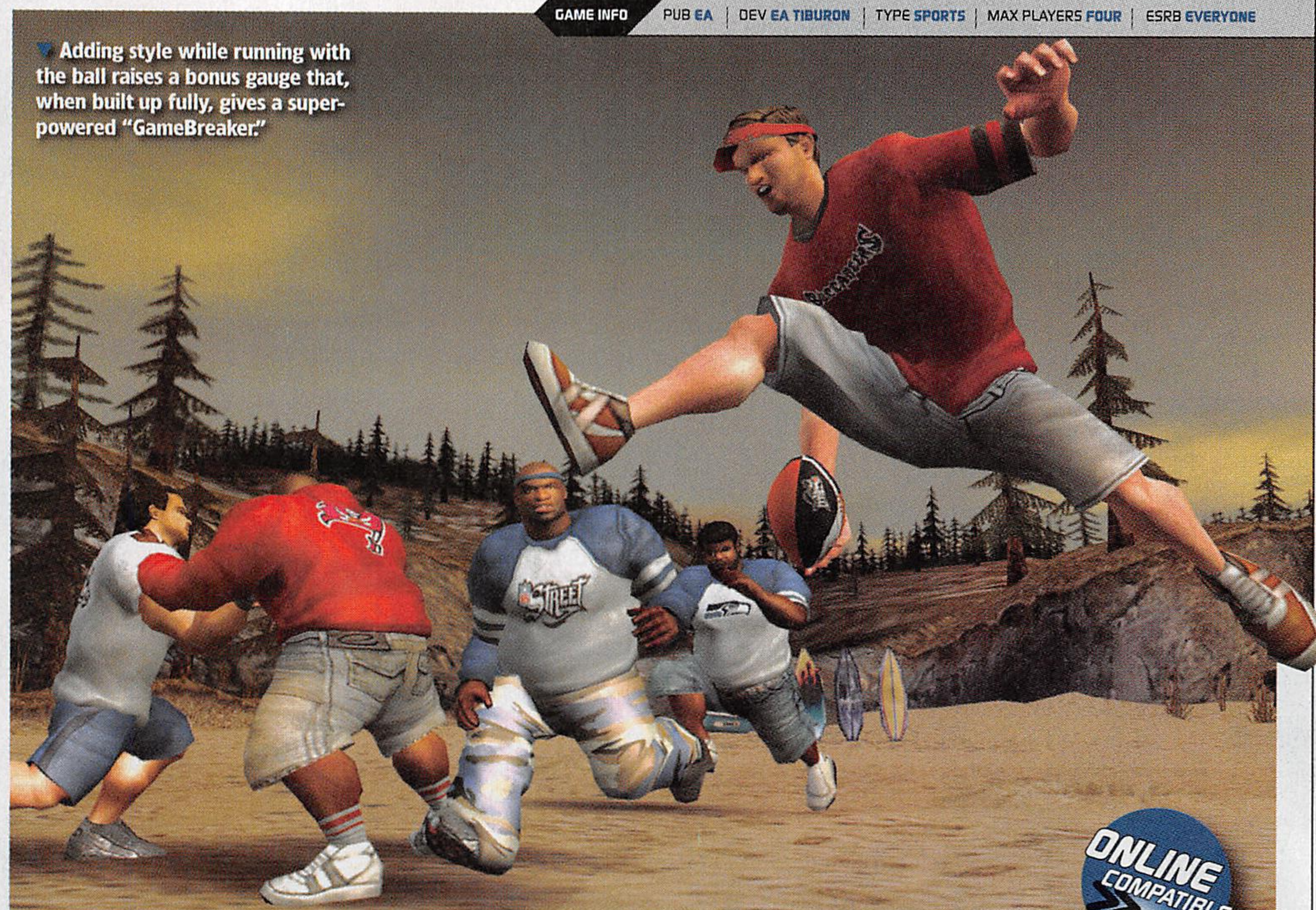


▲ If you hate reading the manual — and face it, we all do — you'll probably get a lot more out of the detailed tutorials.

With its intuitive controls, fresh attitude, and oh-so-addictive gameplay, we don't have to tell you

how ridiculously fun *NBA Street* was. Now EA is looking to do the same thing for pro football. Tiburon, the same development studio that makes ultra-realistic magic with the *Madden* series, tackles top-notch, decidedly over-the-top, arcade-style football with *NFL Street*.

NFL Street provides 7-on-7 games with tons of energy, very few rules, and no helmets. The players are over-animated, cartoonish caricatures of their real-life counterparts, including such classic players as Barry Sanders and William "Refrigerator"



NFL STREET

What if NFL players were big old cartoon characters?

ONLINE
COMPATIBLE

PSM
MUST-BUY
SILVER

Perry, who make big leaps and exaggerated moves: laterals, spins, hurdles, and more, as they work their way down the field. As with *NBA Street*, the point isn't just to score, but also to look good doing it.

To this end, penalties are a joke and there's plenty of trash talk and celebration to be had. In fact, style points are added for special plays and moves. When the style meter is full, a "GameBreaker" can be unleashed, which gives offensive players an easier time powering over opponents and awards defensive players more of a chance to run through a block or cause a turnover.

There are also a wide variety of gameplay modes offered. Quick Game jumps right into the action, and Pickup Game enables you to select an all-star team from all of the NFL clubs. The NFL Challenge provides two types of action with a team of your own creation: quick Challenges, such as shutting out the opponent, scoring a TD in a particular way or leading after a certain number of plays, and the Ladder, which takes you through a tournament of games

PSM 9 **OUTSTANDING**
The rowdy juice that gave *NBA Street* its flavor has been poured on a football. It has the playability of a *Madden* game, but the wilder action will have you whoopin' it up.

against each of the NFL squads. Winning will unlock more logos, gear and different fields for you to dominate. It also nets you more Development Points, which are used to build up your players' stats, so they're more capable on the field.

Multiplayer gameplay comes in the form of cooperative or competitive action for up to four players. PS2 players also enjoy the exclusive option to take their game online and show their skillz to the world.

Yo, this ain't no touch football game, son. If you think you've got the style and the talent, grab your controller, hide your cell phone in the goal post, and meet us on the field. The regular NFL season may be over, but it's the perfect time for pigskin die-hards to take to the street.

ANDY EDDY

HOW IT STACKS UP

Madden NFL 2004	10
ESPN NFL Football	9
NBA Street, Vol. 2	9
NFL Street	9
NFL Blitz Pro	7

▼ EA Field is a replica of the open courtyard and surrounding buildings at EA's real world Northern California HQ. We know because we were there... until security showed up.



GAME INFO | PUB: EIDOS | DEV: IREM | TYPE: ACTION | MAX PLAYERS: ONE | ESRB: EVERYONE

▼ *R-Type Final* is almost on par with *Contra: Shattered Soldier* visually and style-wise.



▲ Why can't your ship have a gun that big?

R-TYPE FINAL

The classic shooter series goes out with a slightly muffled bang

The original *R-Type*, circa 1987, is still considered by many — yours truly included — to be one of, if not the best side-scrolling shoot-'em-ups ever created. *R-Type Final* marks the end of the series' run, which has seen its ups and down across many console and arcade incarnations. *R-Type Final* occupies a sort of middle ground; it's not a high point for the series, but it's still a solid shooter with lots of offer across the board.

The gameplay is familiar stuff for anyone who's dabbled in the series before. Your ship gains multiple weapon upgrades, a sort of drone/shield that can roam independently or attach to your craft's front or back, and the ability to charge up your basic shot for a two-tiered super blast. Pretty basic stuff, truth be told.

Visually, the game is anything but basic. It's detailed, crisp,

▶ Learning the enemy's patterns is the key to saving your rear — in this case, literally.

and certainly doesn't skimp on special effects or background variety. Compared to a lot of other shooters, *R-Type Final* is fairly slow-paced, though your ship can operate at for different speeds. The pacing is deliberate, as this has always been a series very much based in learning enemy placement and attack patterns, but numerous empty, slow stretches filled with background rotation and panning really slow the pace down more than they generate any real "oohs" or "ahhs."

The real saving grace of *R-Type Final* is its whopping selection of customizable ships — from the original R9 to a transforming fighter craft. Each ship has its own unique attack capabilities, which means you're going to get a slightly different gameplay experience depending on which one you choose. The fact that they're unlocked for performing well, and there are



various score attack and other modes, gives the game some real lasting value.

In the end — and this really is the end — *R-Type Final* is a good, but not truly exceptional finale for the beloved series. Diehard fans will find a lot to like, not to mention plenty of challenge, and anyone who's never experienced the series is definitely in for a treat.

RANDY NELSON



▶ The number of selectable craft in the game is impressive.

HOW IT STACKS UP

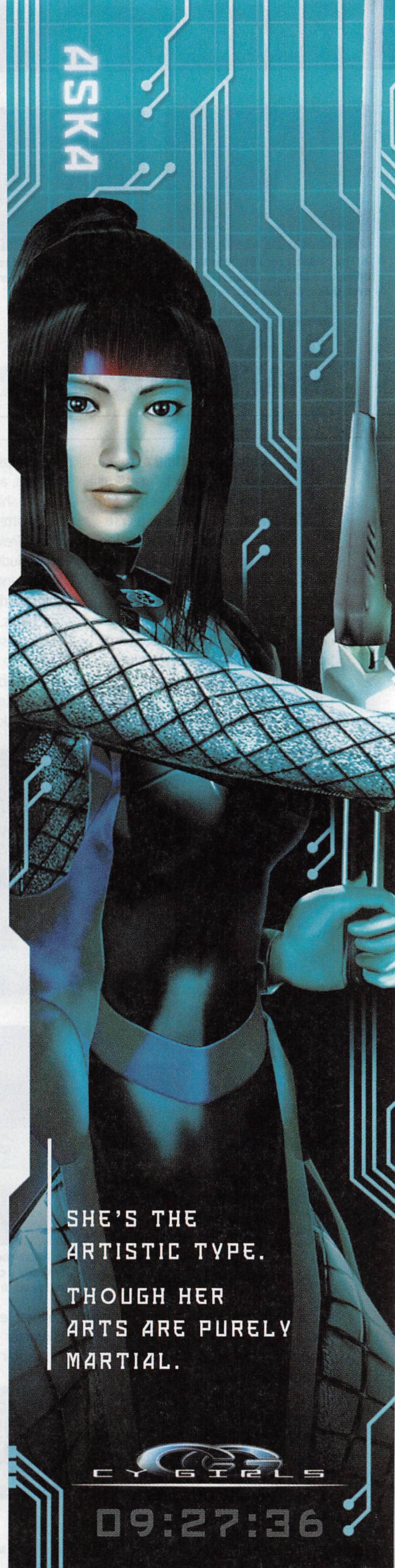
Contra: Shattered Soldier	9
Rez	8
R-Type Final	7
Sky Gunner	7
Gradius III And IV	5

PSM
FINAL SCORE

7

GOOD

A solid, if somewhat slowly-paced, shooter that offers up loads of ship variety and a good amount of challenge.

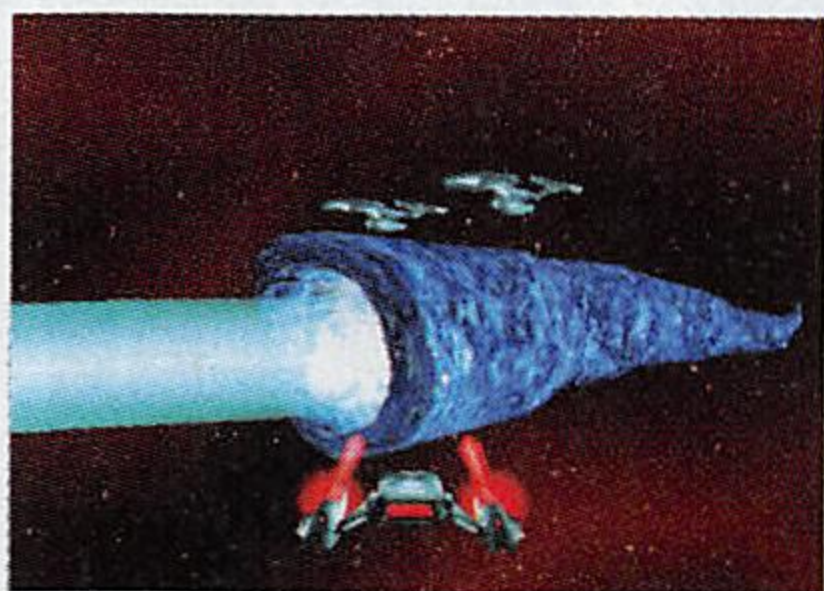


SHE'S THE
ARTISTIC TYPE.

THOUGH HER
ARTS ARE PURELY
MARTIAL.

CY GIRLS

09:27:36



▲ The meanest corn Bugle in the universe is back, and hungrier than ever. Quick! Get the dip!



▲ The ships you fly tend to be one-man fighter craft, but your targets are often the big boys.



▲ The game combines elements of several *Trek* series and films.



“What? He’s... he’s shooting down the *Enterprise*!” Somewhere, a trekkie who doesn’t realize this is the “*Mirror, Mirror*” universe just fainted.

STAR TREK: SHATTERED UNIVERSE

Rule the Universe like Captain Kirk!

Admirably cutting across several distinct “eras” of *Star Trek* chronology, *Star Trek: Shattered Universe* is a space-combat action game in the vein of LucasArts’ *Star Wars Starfighter* series, but set in the dark, dystopian alternate reality of the classic *Trek* episode “*Mirror, Mirror*” (the one with the evil, bearded Spock). Hunted by the forces of the Federation’s star-hungry dopple-ganger, the Imperial Star Fleet, players pilot a series of nimble, fighter-plane-

style ships against similar enemy fighters, as well as screen-filling capital ships.

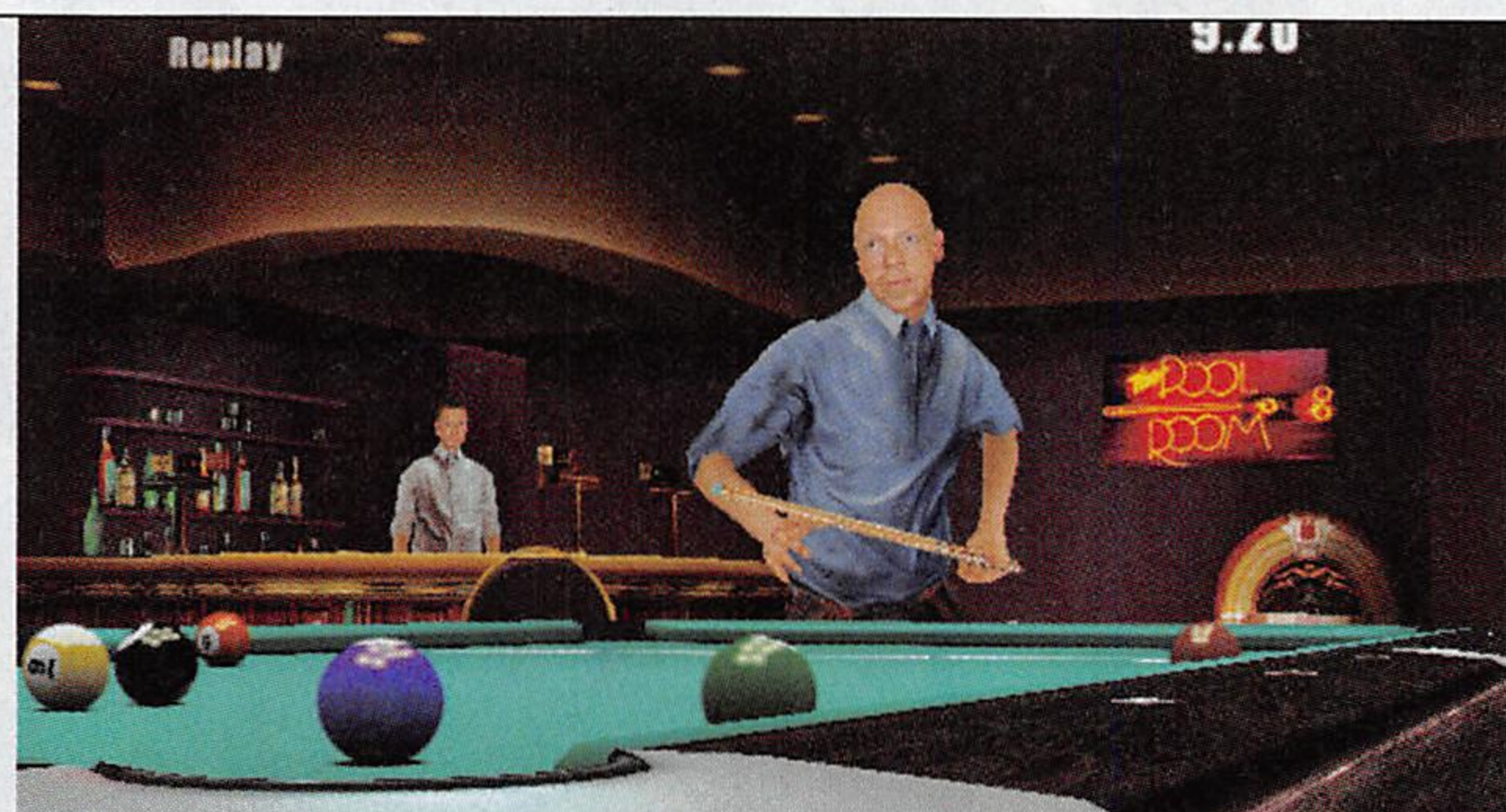
Shattered Universe gets the visual *Trek* style and flavor dead-on, including appearances by both classic and movie-era Federation ships, and planet-killer doomsday machines. But the game’s mechanics are almost too simple and stylized. There are no true physics here, but rather sub-arcade flight physics that let fighters zip unconvincingly back-and-forth at will, with

no inertia to speak of. Which isn’t to say it’s not challenging, because even the so-called “easy” battles are hard and unforgiving as hell, with vastly superior (and gorgeous-looking) forces ready to pour on the impressive, but scripted, ass-kicking.

Hammering an enemy capital ship with phasers until it burns and explodes is satisfying in its way, but it’s a shame that savvy Trekkers weren’t given more credit in terms of the physics and depth-of-combat scheme. CHRIS HUDAK

PSM 5
FINAL SCORE

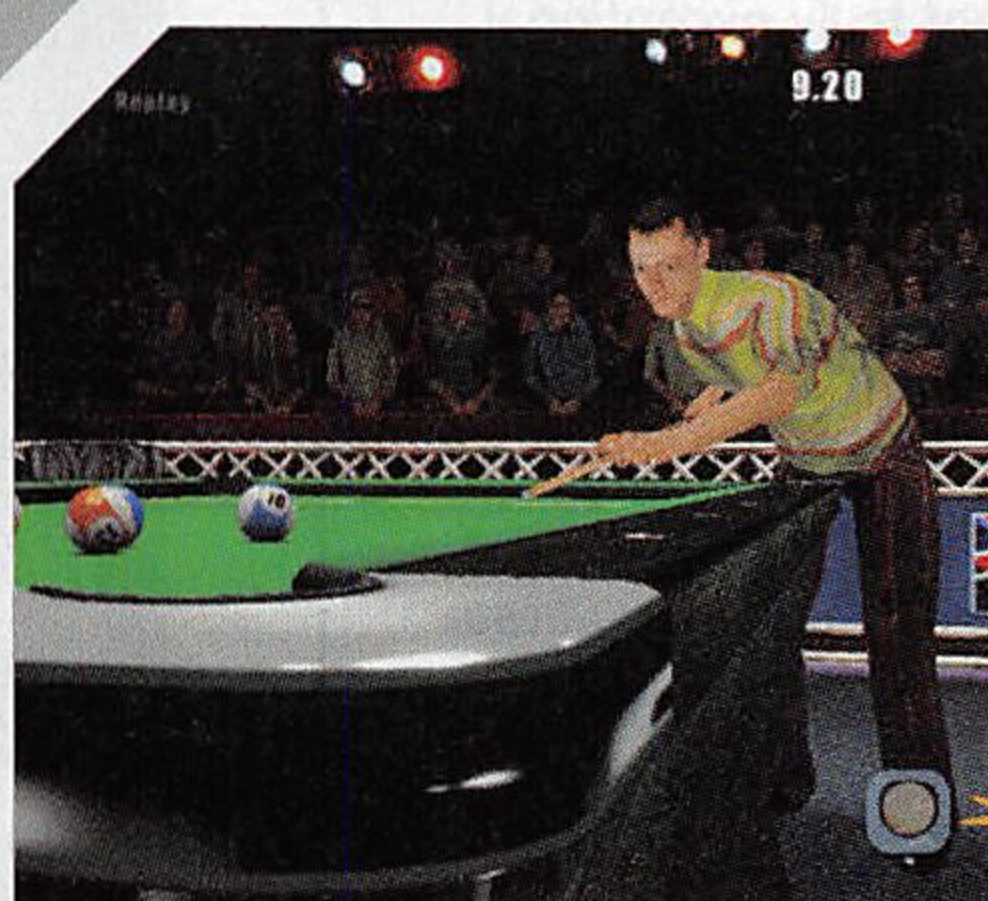
SO-SO
Great looks and sound, with dead-on style points, but disappointingly dumbed-down in terms of mechanics. It just doesn’t “boldly go” nearly as far as it should have.



▲ The replays show you critical shots from a nearly ball’s-eye view.

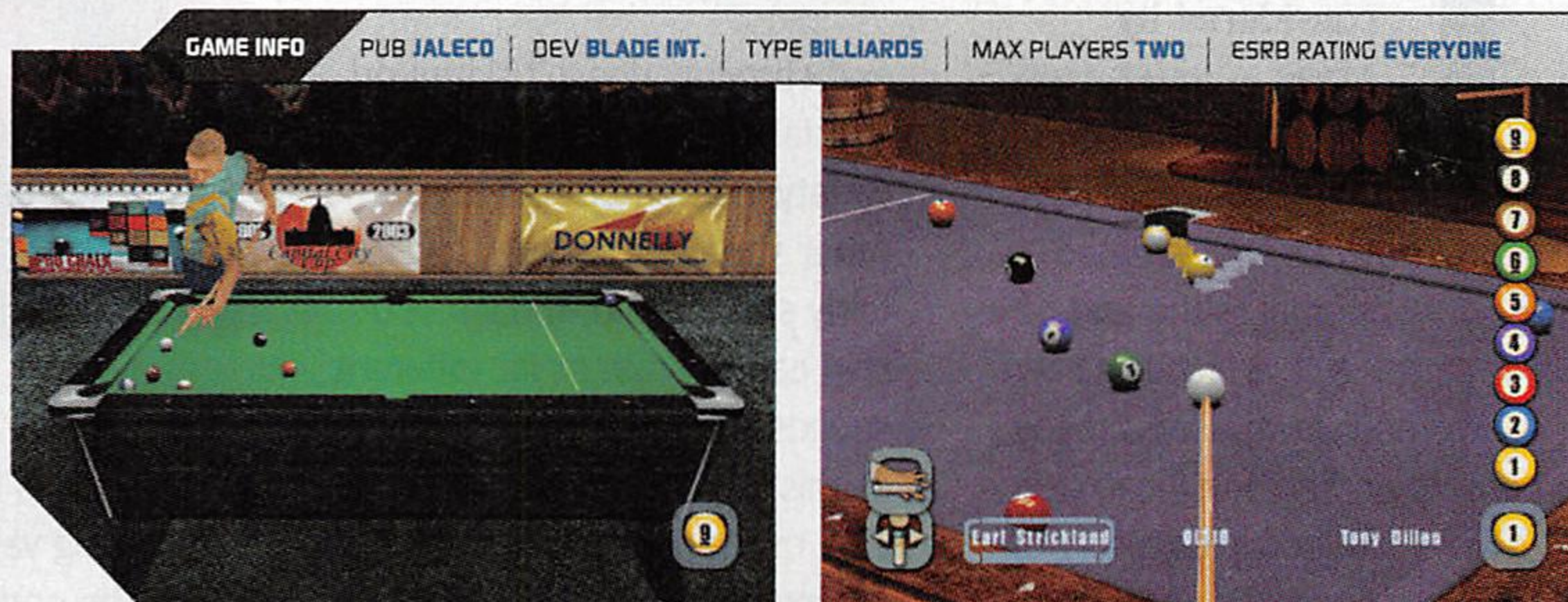
Are there too many pool videogames out there, or not enough? The answer, confusingly enough, is “yes.” It’s always good to see a decent pool game, but the PS2 hasn’t really had a good one yet, and it would be nice to see something new brought to the “table.” *World Championship Pool 2004* is a new contribution in that it’s the first PS2 billiards title to add online play.

WCP2004 offers the expected range of games: 8-Ball and 9-Ball, Straight Pool and Snooker, and boasts options that include game rules variants, custom appearances for



▲ Watch those corners, pal! Pool isn’t typically a contact sport, but this fella may still need to wear a cup.

balls/tables, locations, and limited character customization. The Career Mode starts the player out as a



▲ In addition to the regular forms of competition, there are two dozen trick shots to learn.

▲ Having a decent aiming interface is critical in a pool game. But it’s also pretty cool to be able to switch your table to purple velvet.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POOL 2004

Call your shot!

ONLINE
COMPATIBLE

circuit nobody and propels him/her up through various competitions and tournaments: European Cup, American 9 Ball Open, Tokyo Classic and, of course, the Mosconi Cup. Other modes include some 24 trick shots, plus special games. These range from the realistic Countdown (timed

8-Ball) and In My Pocket (a zone-based 9-Ball variant), to the fantastic: certain sections of the table in Minefield will send balls up into the air, and the balls in Unexploded Ball have fuses, and eventually explode.

The core mechanics of *WCP2004* are perfectly solid, but the presentation and extras falter a bit. The custom characters and supposedly unique environments offer too little variety, and the commentary ranges from cheesy-bad to flat-out useless. Thankfully, it’s still a good, if uninspired, pool sim at its core. CHRIS HUDAK

PSM 6
FINAL SCORE

OKAY
A competent, but low-frills, pool sim with the admittedly overdue bonus of online play. If the field of felt is where you play your ball, this is for you. If not, better rent it first.

GAME INFO | PUB LUCASARTS | DEV THE COLLECTIVE | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS FOUR | ESRB TEEN



▲ *Wrath Unleashed* has a brilliant concept, but neither the strategy or fighting elements are quite deep enough.



▲ Does this helmet make my butt look big?

WRATH: UNLEASHED

Not quite Star Wars' space chess, but getting warmer

Heavily inspired by Electronic Arts' old-school classic, *Archon*, LucasArts' *Wrath Unleashed* is basically "chess with monsters". You control a deity representing one of the four elements – earth, air, fire, or water – who must rid the Shattered Lands of the other three deities.

The game takes place on a series of giant land masses which float in space, conveniently covered with hexagonal tiles. You maneuver a small army of fell fantasy beasts, such as Cyclops and Unicorns, in an attempt to either gain power points or exterminate the enemy force.

When two critters land on the same hex, the overly simple strategic elements dissolve into

joypad-hammering madness. A battle arena loads in and you have to combine magical attacks and good old-fashioned brutality to cut down your opponent in a duel to the death. These fracasos are frequently imbalanced, and the rudimentary move sets are almost identical for each element. This lack of depth in



◀ Real care has been taken in creating the creature and character models, which showcase some pleasing polygon counts.

unit balance (which, to be fair, the original

Archon had as well) and thin move sets, the real bummer is the 20+ second load times you're forced to endure both before and after each one-on-one battle. On the plus side, there's a wealth of unlockable monsters, artwork, and maps, including a four-player ode to LucasArts' main franchise — let's just say "that's no moon", for those patient enough to get them unlocked.

WU is rough, plodding, and yet still sometimes enthralling. You can easily enjoy 15-20 hours with it, though online options are absent, but when a third of that time is spent staring at a loading screen, it's likely you'll unleash your own wrath in the form of naughty words bellowed at your

TV. DAVID S. J. HODGSON



▲ Each hex on the battle-field has unique elemental properties, which give a slight advantage to one creature or another.

grip on the basic concepts of combat, it's possible to screw up royally with regards to strategy and still hack and slash your way through.

Despite the questionable

HOW IT STACKS UP

Culdcept	8
Wrath: Unleashed	7
Dynasty Tactics 2	7
Goblin Commander	6
Bloody Roar 4	6

PSM
FINAL SCORE

7

GOOD A shallow mix of strategy and slapping, cursed by long load times, *WU* falters a bit, but staggers back by keeping the core tenets of its lineage intact.



SHE'D LOVE TO
TAKE YOU OUT.
FROM 20 METERS.

CYBIRLS

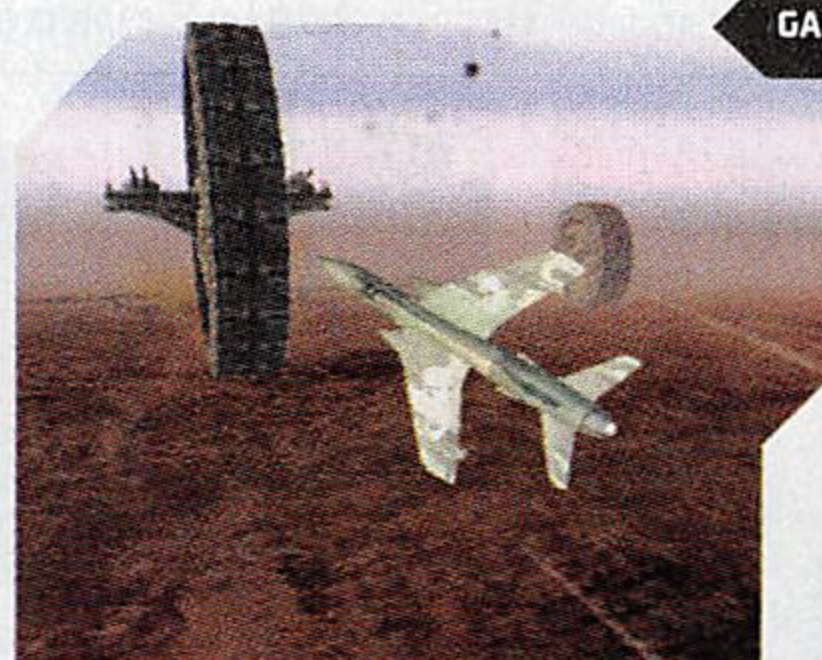
07:18:54



▲ The game starts with your city being nuked by the enemy... those rat bastards!



▲ There are plenty of vintage planes in the game, like this classic Vietnam-era F4F.



▲ Oh, no! The desert is being overrun by the nefarious Big Wheel people! Attack! Attack!!

GAME INFO PUB KONAMI | DEV KCE | TYPE AIR COMBAT | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING TEEN



▲ While the action can sometimes get intense, the visuals aren't much to write home about.

AIRFORCE DELTA STRIKE

This is no way to run an Air Force...

In the world of videogame air combat, the skies are ruled by that Ace of aces, *Ace Combat 4*, which sets the stage upon which all other air combat games must be judged. That being said, let's cut to the scorecards.

On the plus side, *AirForce Delta Strike* does offer a cockpit view, a necessity for those who like their combat as realistic as possible. The controls are tight, even though the button layout can be a bit confusing.

There are many interesting, vintage aircraft to fly, from the prop-driven P-38 Lightning, to the sleek, deadly beauties of today's air forces.

Some of the terrain maps are interesting, but most don't have the realistic grandeur that *AC4* offers.

Okay, now let's get to the other side of the equation.

Throughout the game, you will be confronted with a cast of characters that act like they just escaped from a mental asylum game. Hypertensive

commanders and mechanics are "balanced" with hyper-cutesy female officers who all want to flirt with you, even as bloody war rages all around them. The air-to-air chatter during combat is whiny and inane. Your

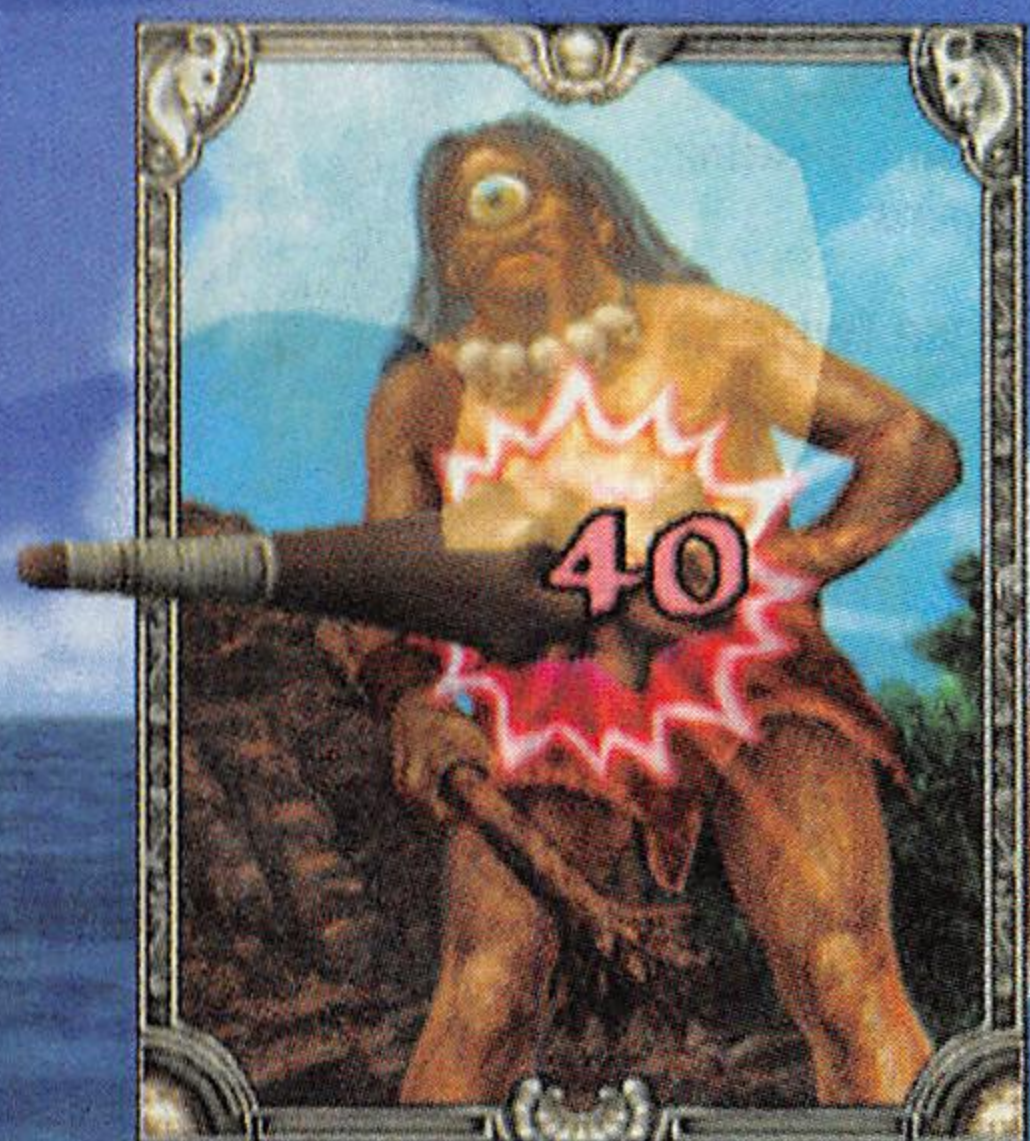
mechanic even steals parts from his own forces and sells them on the black market! Geez!

If you can avoid the story line (and you can't...), *AFDS* ends up being merely okay. **BILL DONOHUE**

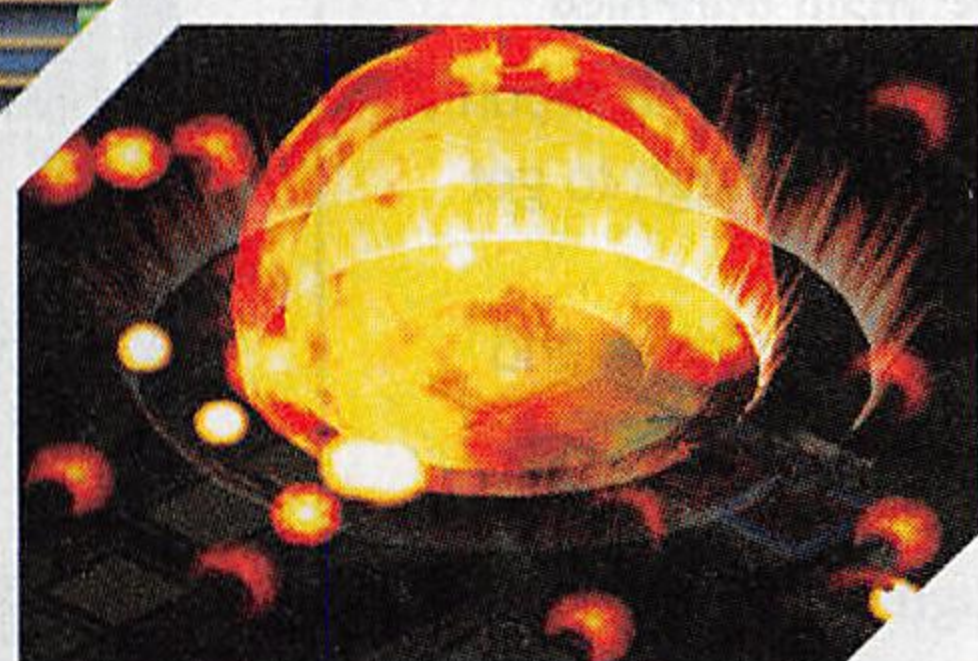
PSM 6
FINAL SCORE

OKAY
The flight sequences, while not drop-dead gorgeous, are okay, but the endless bickering and inane character interaction during the cutscenes will drive you freaking crazy!

▼ The battles are a bit low-tech, with the two cards just sort of facing off, but the gameplay is strangely compelling.



30 HP
20+20 ST



▲ Yeah, go ahead and try to build a hotel on this square, buddy.

You'll exploit the terrain to entrench them, weapons to arm them, and magic spells to affect them.

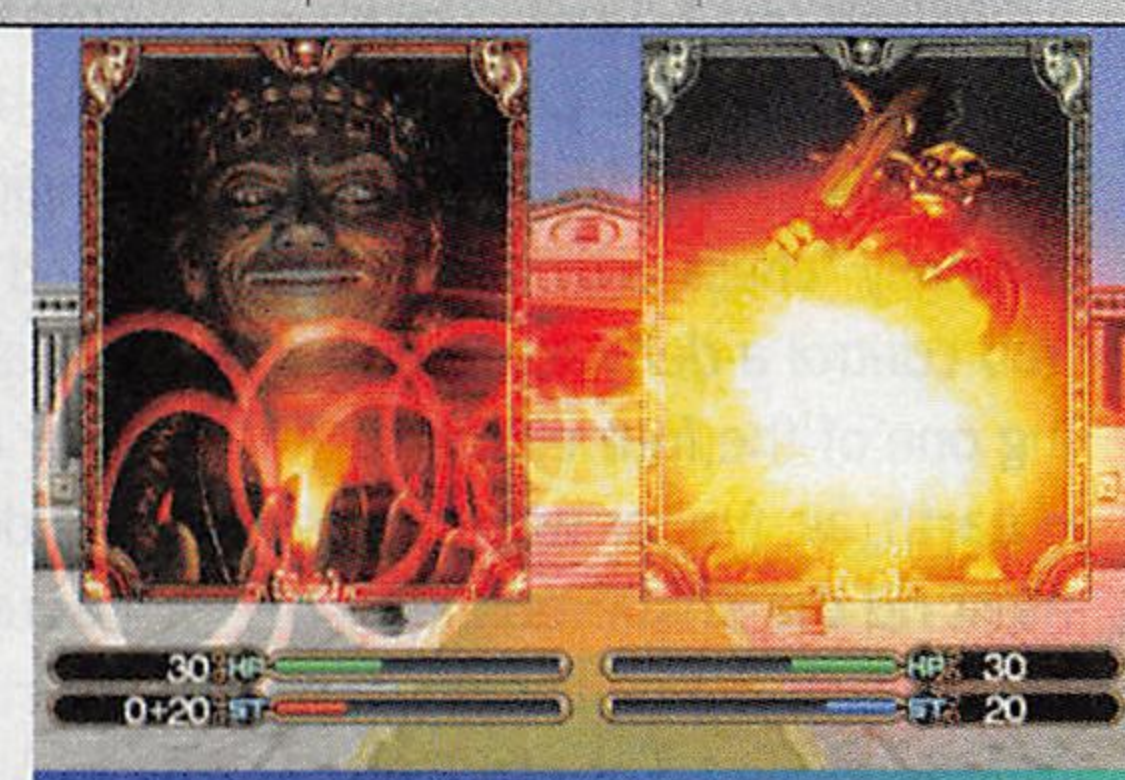
If the notion of a fantasy-themed, trading card, strategy videogame frightens you just a little, it probably should. Even for habitual gamers, that's a big, elevated Orange Alert on the Geek Terror scale. And yet, this potent pill of hardcore nerdiness goes down surprisingly smoothly.

Hugely successful in Japan, *Culdcept* is a fascinating game which plays like a cross between *Magic: The Gathering* and a *Monopoly*-style board-game — die rolls, "rent" and all. Rather than marking your territory with monster hotel chains, you'll populate them with actual monsters.

GAME INFO PUB NEC/CAPCOM | DEV OMIYA SOFT | TYPE STRATEGY | MAX PLAYERS FOUR | ESRB RATING TEEN



▲ It's a quirky little board game, but darned if it isn't fun to play.



▲ Your spell books are assembled just like the decks in *Magic: The Gathering*, so you can customize it almost any way you like.

CULDCEPT
Your fate lies in the cards...

PSM MUST-BUY
BRONZE

Gameplay itself is card-based, with players drawing random cards from their spell book and using or discarding them as necessary. There are hundreds of cards, and this variety, combined with some crazy battlefields, makes for a surprisingly versatile experience. To wit, if you

can't defeat the enemy's creatures directly, you can alter the game's very terrain, or directly interfere with your opponent's roll of the dice.

All this interweaving fun comes at a price, however: the only "tutorial" comes in the form of page upon page of text instructions. Simply put, *Culdcept* is not even remotely newbie-friendly, and there's a definite, unavoidable learning curve. Once you know what you're doing, though, this is a strangely deep and addictive tangle of fantasy gaming. **CHRIS HUDAK**

PSM 8
FINAL SCORE

VERY GOOD
Even its obscurity and relatively steep learning curve can't bring down this subtle, challenging and entertaining gem of a game. Seek it out if you can!

HANDS-ON!

Two new ways to control yourself

Gamester Phoenix pad

M.S.R.P.: \$14.99

If there was some sort of award for making the coolest-looking controller, Gamester would certainly get it for the Phoenix. With its strange, cut out frame, translucent casing and buttons, and silver and gray high-lights, it definitely has more style and flair than the average Dual Shock 2 wannabe.

It plays pretty well, too. There's a nice, solid overall feel, the D-pad is responsive, and the analog sticks are slightly tacky to the touch and have concave topsides, so you can really lock your thumbs into them. This is complimented by rubberized grips and an additional switch on the lower edge that enables you to invert the vertical axis of the right analog stick, just in case you're playing a flight sim or FPS that doesn't give you the capability to switch it in-game.

The Phoenix's only real weaknesses are that the  and  buttons have been moved lower down on the bridge to make room for a big, gaudy logo, making them a little too close to the analog sticks and tough to hit mid-game. And of course, that it still has a cord, which we could personally do without. Finally, while the controller performed well in our tests, there's no way of knowing just how durable it really is. Still, if you aren't ready to take the plunge and go wireless, this is an attractive solidly performing alternative. **ERIC BRATCHER**



► The Phoenix pad sure is pretty – now, if only we could get that cord removed and relocate the  and  buttons.

PSM FINAL SCORE 7

It looks great, and manages to be very grippable. Still, with Pelican's Predator out there, we're less and less willing to settle for controllers with cords.

Gamester ClashPads

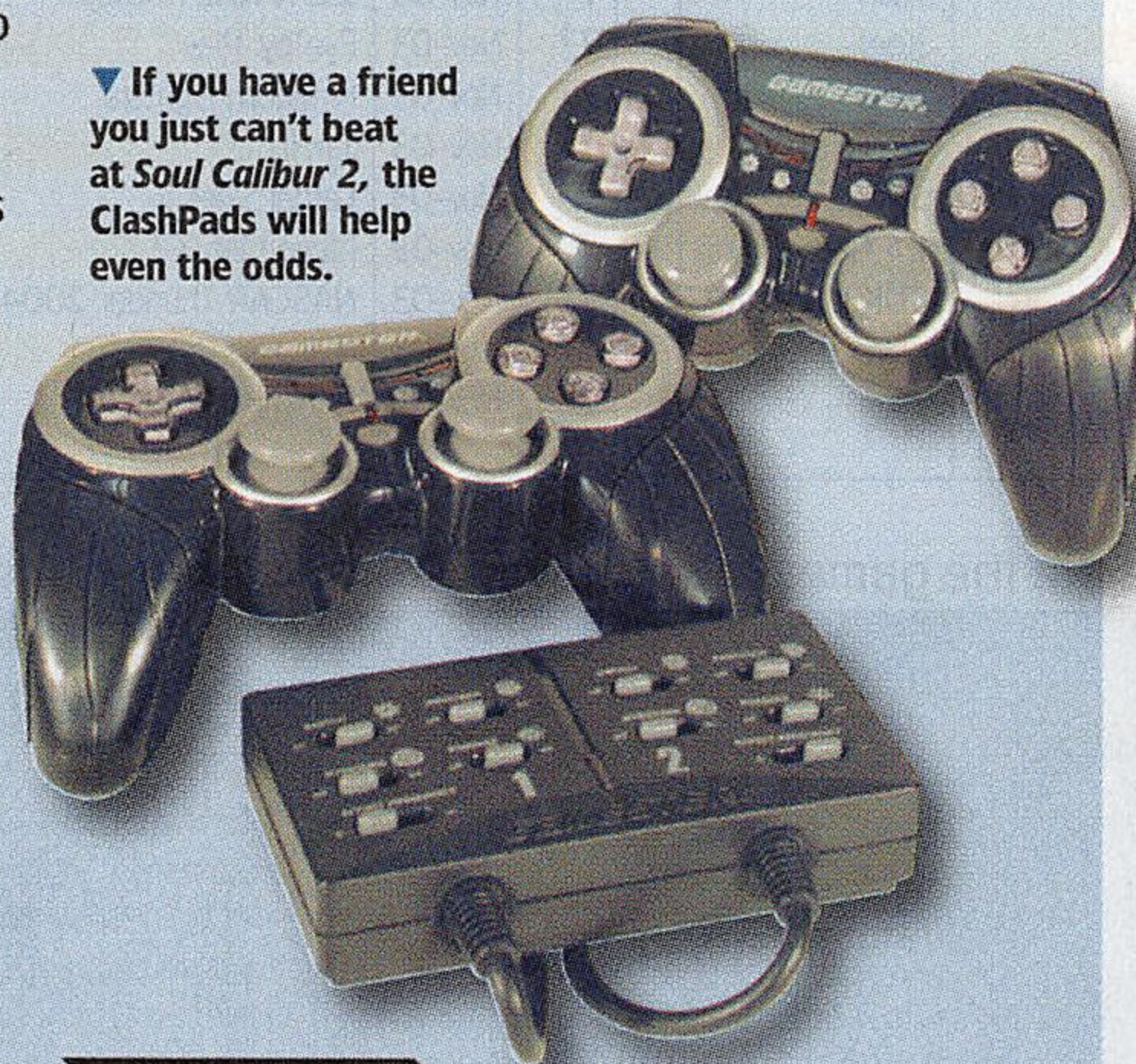
M.S.R.P.: \$29.99

Now here's an idea so overdue, its time has almost passed. The ClashPads are designed to level the field in one-on-one fighting games like *King of Fighters 2000/2001* and *Soul Calibur 2*, or at least make things less predictable. Basically, it's two controllers connected to a special switchbox that enables all sorts of controller-related extra effects: Switch scrambles your opponent's button layout, Knockout disables their controls entirely, Overturn screws with the sensitivity of their analog sticks, and Possess simply gives you total control over their pad.

Overall, the Clash pads are cool and a good idea, but we have to think that they could have used a couple, more gameplay-oriented effects, like Turbo, Slowdown, or programmable macros, to make them even more useful. We're also disappointed that both controllers and the box are all permanently tethered to one another. These controllers are okay (they feel almost just like the Phoenix, reviewed above), but we'd rather have our choice of pads. More importantly, if one of the three things breaks — and let's face it, every pad breaks eventually — the whole rig is useless. This product would be a safer purchase if the box

were a pass-through and the controllers could be detached and replaced separately. **ERIC BRATCHER**

▼ If you have a friend you just can't beat at *Soul Calibur 2*, the ClashPads will help even the odds.



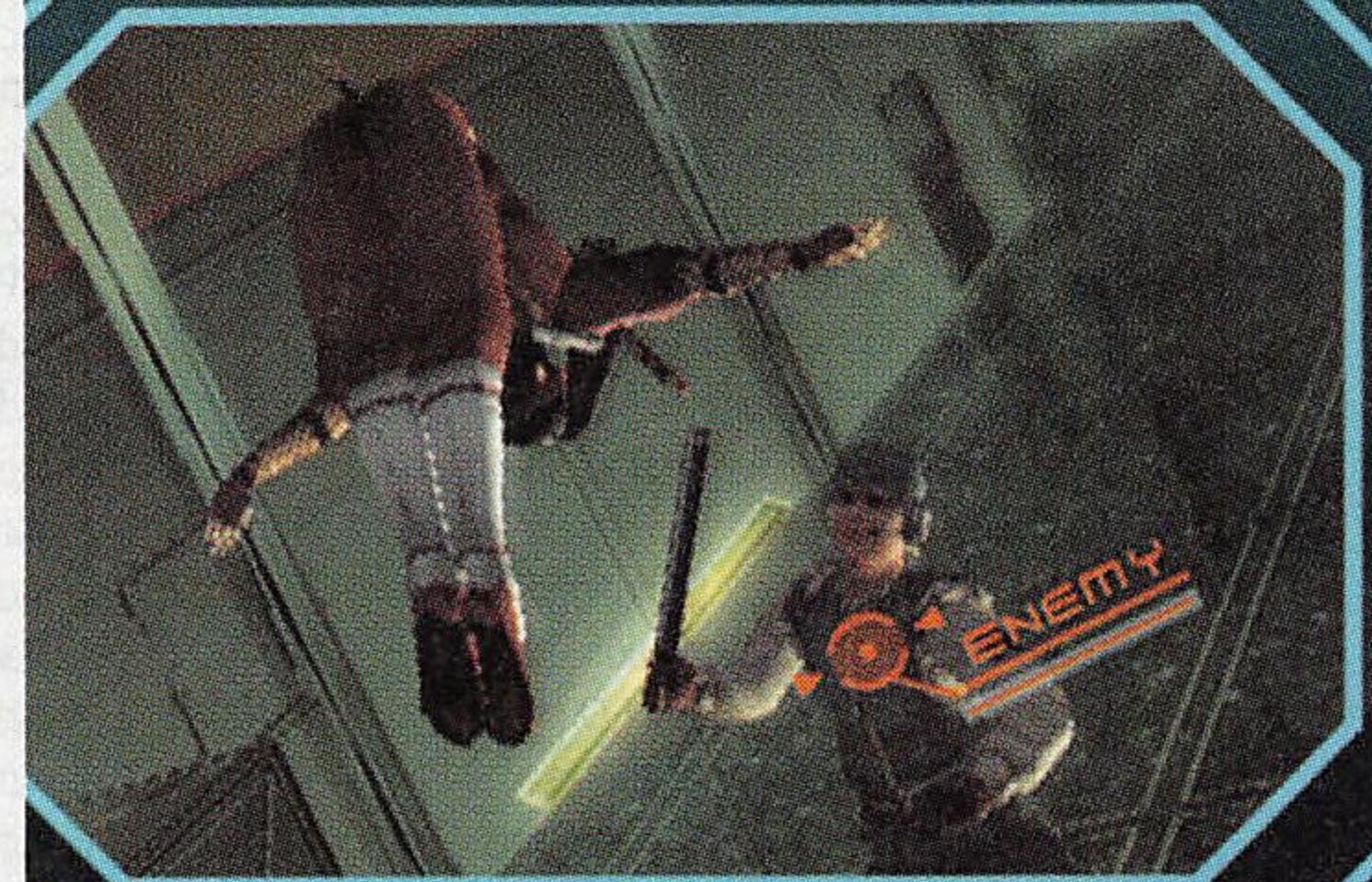
PSM FINAL SCORE 6

A good idea, but we're skeptical how long two fighting game pads of average construction are going to last.

2 GIRLS.
2 WORLDS.
1 HARDCORE MISSION.



2 DISCS • 2 ADVENTURES



CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON:

ASKA, WITH HER LETHAL NINJA SKILLS – OR ICE, A FIREARMS EXPERT WITH NERVES OF STEEL. THEN TAKE THE FIGHT AGAINST EVIL FROM THE REAL WORLD INTO CYBERSPACE, WHERE THE RULES ARE RADICALLY DIFFERENT – BUT THE ACTION'S EVERY BIT AS HARDCORE.

CY GIRLS

PlayStation 2



MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Blood
Strong Language
Suggestive Themes
Violence

KONAMI

WWW.KONAMI.COM/USA

© TAKARA CO., LTD 2004 © 2004 KONAMI and Konami Computer Entertainment Japan. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. KONAMI® is a registered trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. © 2004 KONAMI CORPORATION. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

SCOREBOARD

Don't buy a game until you check here first!

SCORE ARCHIVE

Iss.	Month	Game Name	Score	Genre	Publisher
81	Feb-04	Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II	8	Action	Interplay
81	Feb-04	EverQuest OA: Frontiers	8	MMORPG	Sony Online
81	Feb-04	Fatal Frame 2: Crimson Butterfly	8	Horror	Tecmo
81	Feb-04	Final Fantasy X-2	9	RPG	Square Enix
81	Feb-04	Intellivision Lives!	8	Collection	Intellivision
81	Feb-04	King Of Fighters 2000/2001	7	Fighting	SNK
81	Feb-04	Lowrider	6	Rhythm	Jaleco
81	Feb-04	Lupin The 3rd: TOSTK	5	Action	Bandai
81	Feb-04	Max Payne 2: TFOMP	8	Action	Rockstar/Take 2
81	Feb-04	Maximo Vs. Army Of Zin	9	Action	Capcom
81	Feb-04	Mission Impossible: Operation Surma	8	Action	Atari
81	Feb-04	Sonic Heroes	7	Platform	Sega
81	Feb-04	Terminator 3: ROTM	5	Action	Atari
80	Jan-04	Battlestar Galactica	5	Action	Vivendi
80	Jan-04	Cabela's Dangerous Hunts	6	FPS	Activision
80	Jan-04	The Fairly Oddparents	6	Platform	THQ
80	Jan-04	Fugitive Hunter: War On Terror	3	Action	Encore
80	Jan-04	.hack//QUARANTINE	7	RPG	Bandai
80	Jan-04	Harry Potter And Sorcerer's Stone	7	Adventure	EA
80	Jan-04	The Hobbit	5	Adventure	Vivendi
80	Jan-04	Looney Tunes: Back In Action	7	Action	EA
80	Jan-04	Manhunt	8	Action	Rockstar
80	Jan-04	Mobile Suit Gundam: EIS	7	Action	Bandai
80	Jan-04	R: Racing Evolution	7	Racing	Namco
80	Jan-04	The Sim's Bustin' Out	8	Sim	EA
80	Jan-04	Spawn: Armageddon	7	Adventure	Namco
80	Jan-04	SpongeBob SquarePants	7	Action	THQ
80	Jan-04	Spy Hunter 2	6	Driving	Midway
80	Jan-04	Tokyo Extreme Racer 3	5	Racing	Crave
80	Jan-04	Tony Hawk's Underground	9	Sports	Activision
80	Jan-04	True Crime: Streets of L.A.	8	Action	Activision
80	Jan-04	Virtual On: MARZ	5	Action	Sega
80	Jan-04	Whiplash	6	Action	Eidos
79	Hol-03	Backyard Wrestling	4	Fighting	Eidos
79	Hol-03	Beyond Good & Evil	9	Adventure	UbiSoft
79	Hol-03	Bionicle	6	Action	EA/Lego
79	Hol-03	Bloody Roar 4	6	Fighting	Konami/Hudson
79	Hol-03	Conflict: Desert Storm II	7	Action	Gotham
79	Hol-03	Crash Nitro Kart	8	Racing	Vivendi
79	Hol-03	Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2	7	Fighting	Atari
79	Hol-03	Dynasty Warriors 4 XL	8	Fighting	Koei
79	Hol-03	ESPN College Hoops	8	Sports	Sega
79	Hol-03	Gladiator: Sword Of Vengeance	8	Fighting	Acclaim
79	Hol-03	Goblin Commander	6	Action	Jaleco
79	Hol-03	Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup	7	Sports	EA Games
79	Hol-03	The Haunted Mansion	8	Adventure	TDK Interactive
79	Hol-03	I-Ninja	7	Action	Namco
79	Hol-03	Kya: Dark Lineage	9	Action	Atari

Iss.	Month	Game Name	Score	Genre	Publisher
79	Hol-03	Lord Of The Rings: ROTK	8	Action	EA
79	Hol-03	March Madness 2004	9	Sports	EA Sports
79	Hol-03	Medal Of Honor: Rising Sun	9	FPS	EA Games
79	Hol-03	Midway Arcade Treasures	7	Arcade	Midway
79	Hol-03	Monster Rancher 4	8	Fighting	Tecmo
79	Hol-03	NBA Shootout 2004	6	Sports	Sony
79	Hol-03	NCAA Final Four 2004	6	Sports	Sony
79	Hol-03	Need For Speed Underground	8	Racing	EA
79	Hol-03	Prince Of Persia: The Sands Of Time	8	Adventure	UbiSoft
79	Hol-03	RPG Maker 2	8	RPG	Agetec
79	Hol-03	Secret Weapons Over Normandy	8	Air Combat	LucasArts
79	Hol-03	Sphinx And The Cursed Mummy	8	Action	THQ
79	Hol-03	Tak And The Power Of Juju	7	Action	THQ
79	Hol-03	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	5	Action	Konami
79	Hol-03	XIII	7	Action	UbiSoft
78	Dec-03	Batman: Rise Of Sin Tzu	6	Action	UbiSoft
78	Dec-03	Castlevania: Lament Of Innocence	9	Action	Konami
78	Dec-03	Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon	7	Fighting	UbiSoft
78	Dec-03	ESPN NBA Basketball	9	Sports	Sega
78	Dec-03	FIFA Soccer 2004	8	Sports	EA
78	Dec-03	Gladius	8	Action/RPG	LucasArts
78	Dec-03	Karaoke Revolution	8	Music	Konami
78	Dec-03	kill.switch	6	Shooter	Namco
78	Dec-03	Metal Arms: GITS	8	Action	Vivendi
78	Dec-03	NBA Jam 2004	6	Sports	Acclaim
78	Dec-03	NBA Live 2004	8	Sports	EA Sports
78	Dec-03	Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando	10	Action	Sony CEA
78	Dec-03	Roadkill	7	Car Combat	Midway
78	Dec-03	Rogue Ops	6	Action	Kemco
78	Dec-03	SSX 3	10	Racing	EA Sports Big
78	Dec-03	Swat: Global Strike Force	8	Action	Vivendi
78	Dec-03	Time Crisis 3	9	Shooter	Namco
78	Dec-03	WWE SmackDown! HCTP	9	Wrestling	THQ
78	Dec-03	Warhammer 40,000: FW	9	FPS	THQ
78	Dec-03	XGRA	6	Racing	Acclaim
77	Nov-03	Cabela's Deer Hunt 2004 Season	6	Shooter	Activision
77	Nov-03	DDRMax 2	9	Dancing	Konami
77	Nov-03	Disney's Extreme Skate Adventure	8	Action	Activision
77	Nov-03	Dynasty Tactics 2	7	Fighting	Koei
77	Nov-03	ESPN NHL Hockey	9	Sports	Sega
77	Nov-03	EyeToy: Play	7	Party	Sony CEA
77	Nov-03	Freedom Fighters	8	Action	EA
77	Nov-03	Jak II	10	Action	Sony CEA
77	Nov-03	Lethal Skies II	8	Air Combat	Sammy
77	Nov-03	Mega Man X7	7	Platform	Capcom
77	Nov-03	NASCAR Thunder 2004	8	Racing	EA
77	Nov-03	NHL Hitz Pro	8	Sports	Midway
77	Nov-03	Robin Hood: DOTC	6	Strategy/Action	Capcom

HIGH SCORES

These are the games that you've GOT to get your hands on!

Iss.	Month	Game name	Score	Genre	Publisher
78	Dec-03	Ratchet & Clank GC	10	Action	Sony CEA
78	Dec-03	SSX 3	10	Racing	EA Sports Big
77	Nov-03	Jak II	10	Action	Sony CEA
75	Sep-03	Madden NFL 2004	10	Sports	EA
75	Sep-03	NCAA 2004	10	Sports	EA Sports
75	Sep-03	VF4: Evolution	10	Fighting	Sega
72	June-03	Midnight Club II	10	Racing	Rockstar
54	Jan-01	Final Fantasy X	10	RPG	Square
52	Dec-01	MGS 2: Sons Of Liberty	10	Action	Konami
52	Dec-01	Tony Hawk's pro Skater 3 (PS2)	10	Sports	Activision
51	Nov-01	Devil May Cry	10	Action	Capcom
50	Oct-01	Madden NFL 2002 (PS2)	10	Sports	EA Sports
47	July-01	Gran Turismo 3	10	Racing	Sony CEA
39	Nov-00	SSX (PS2)	10	Racing	Sony CEA
81	Feb-04	Final Fantasy X-2	9	RPG	Square Enix

Iss.	Month	Game name	Score	Genre	Publisher
81	Feb-04	Maximo Vs. Army Of Zin	9	Action	Capcom
80	Jan-04	Tony Hawk's Underground	9	Sports	Activision
79	Hol-03	Beyond Good & Evil	9	Adventure	UbiSoft
79	Hol-03	Kya: dark Lineage	9	Action	Atari
79	Hol-03	March Madness 2004	9	Sports	EA Sports
79	Hol-03	Medal Of Honor: Rising Sun	9	FPS	EA Games
78	Dec-03	Castlevania: LOI	9	Action	Konami
78	Dec-03	ESPN NBA Basketball	9	Sports	Sega
78	Dec-03	Time Crisis 3	9	Shooter	Namco
78	Dec-03	WWE SmackDown! HCTP	9	Wrestling	THQ
78	Dec-03	Warhammer 40,000: FW	9	FPS	THQ
77	Nov-03	DDRMax 2	9	Dancing	Konami
77	Nov-03	ESPN NHL Hockey	9	Sports	Sega
77	Nov-03	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004	9	Sports	EA
76	Oct-03	Buffy The Vampire Slayer	9	Action	Vivendi Unv.



ONIMUSHA BLADE WARRIORS

**EVERY FIGHT IS A WAR...
EVERY WARRIOR IS A LEGEND.**

Command the noble universe of Onimusha in this hardcore 3-D action fighting game. Select your Warrior from 24 characters from the world of Onimusha and prepare to battle. Fight solo or with up to three others for lightning fast multi-player battles that show off your skills as the ultimate Warrior.

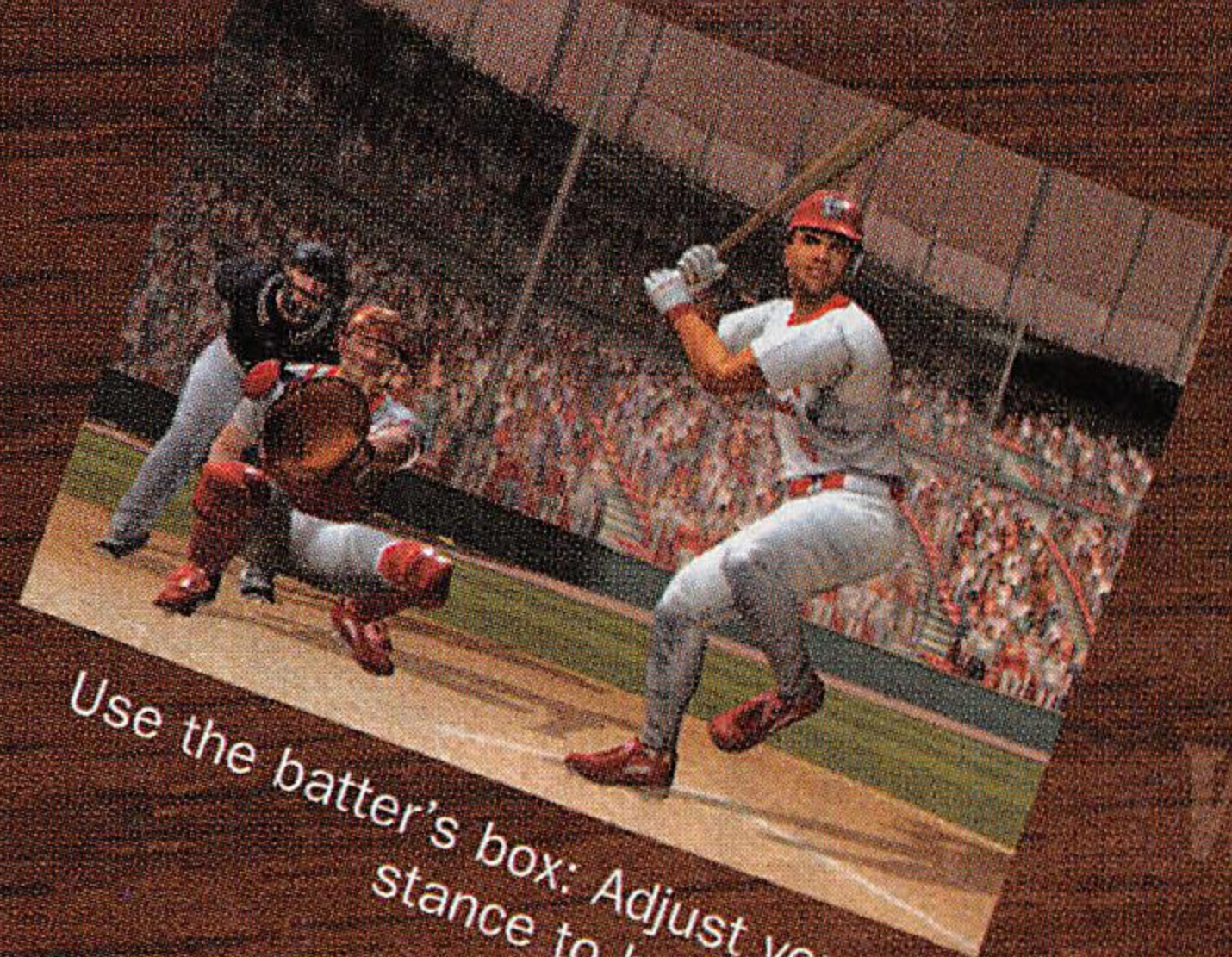
TEEN
T
Violence
Suggestive Themes
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB



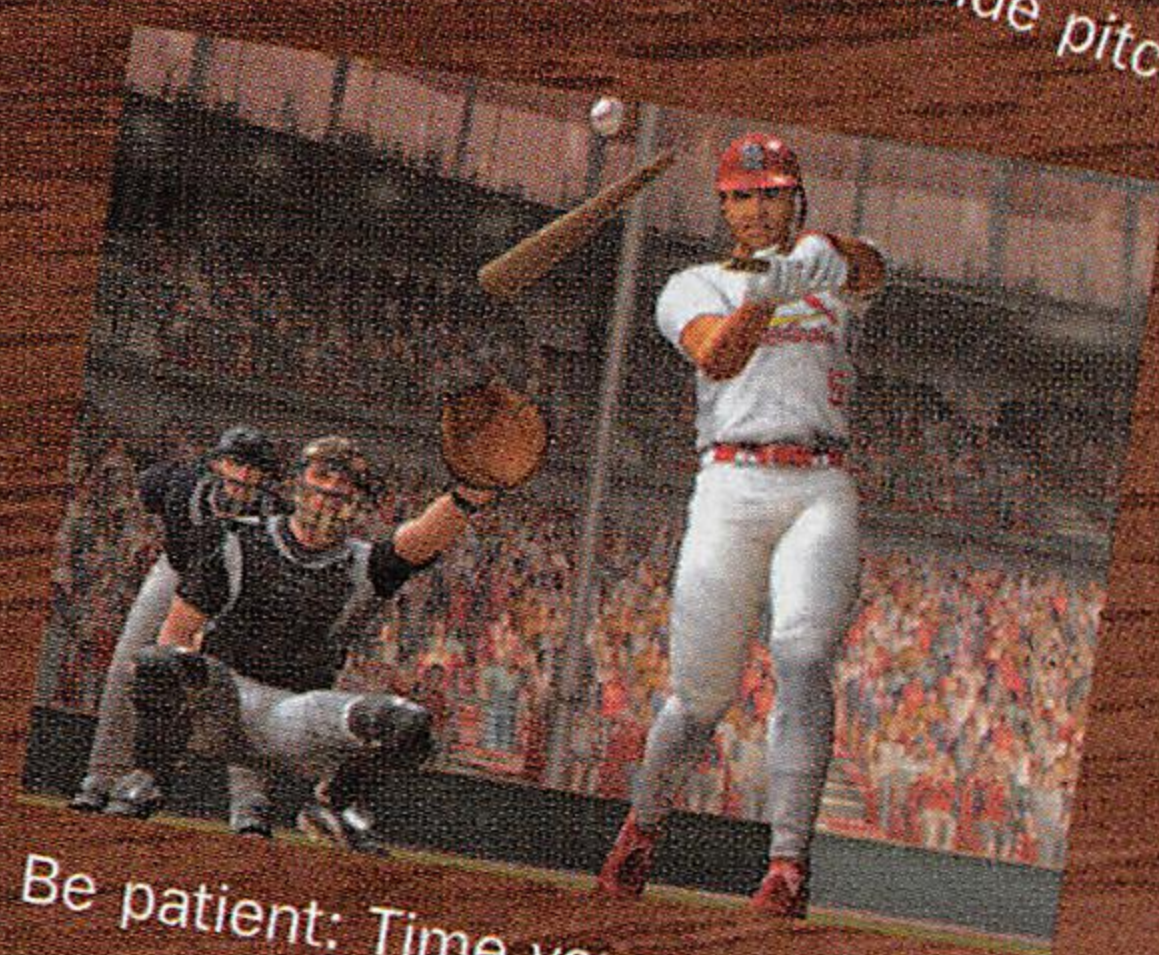
PlayStation®2

CAPCOM
capcom.com

© 2003 Capcom Co., Ltd. © 2003 Capcom U.S.A., Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM LOGO are registered trademarks of Capcom Co., Ltd. ONIMUSHA BLADE WARRIORS is a trademark of Capcom Co., Ltd. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are owned by their respective owners.



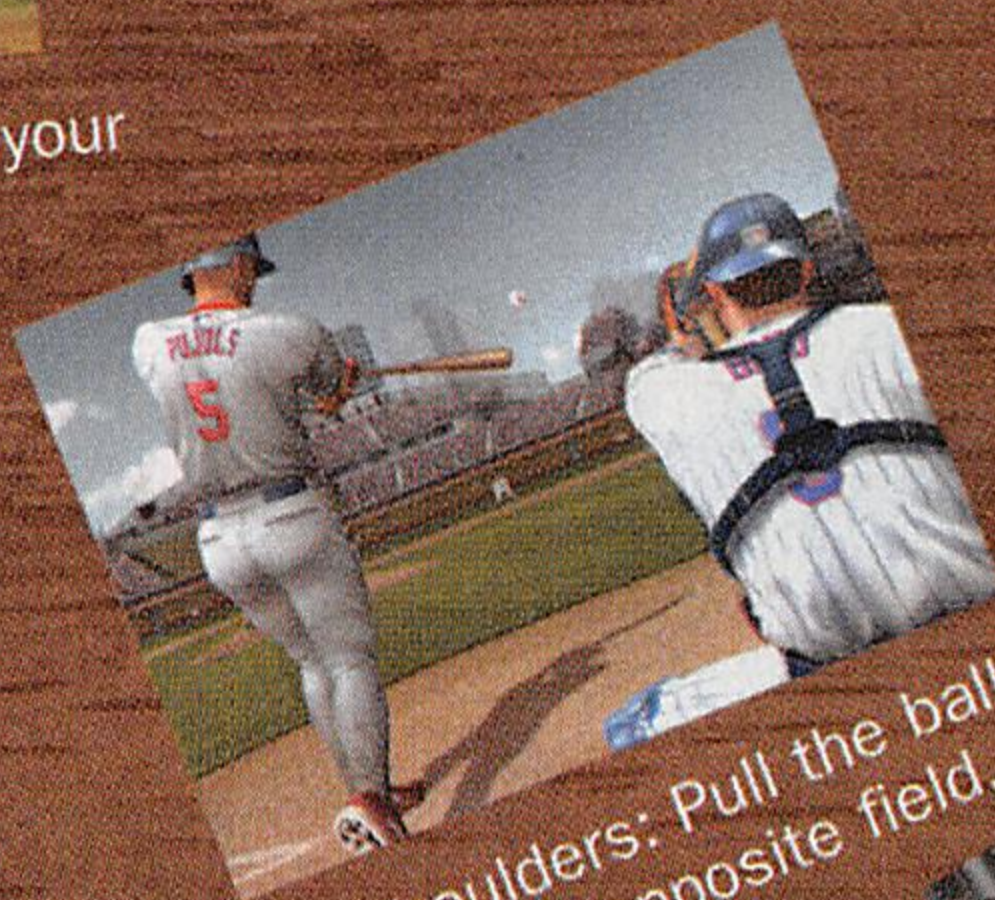
Use the batter's box: Adjust your stance to handle inside pitches.



Be patient: Time your swing to make contact with off-speed stuff.



React to the pitch: Adjust your swing level to go after the ball.



Adjust your shoulders: Pull the ball or go opposite field.



Make contact: Swing for power, drag bunt, or slap at it to stay alive.

WIND BLOWING OUT TO RIGHT.
WIND BLOWING OUT TO RIGHT.

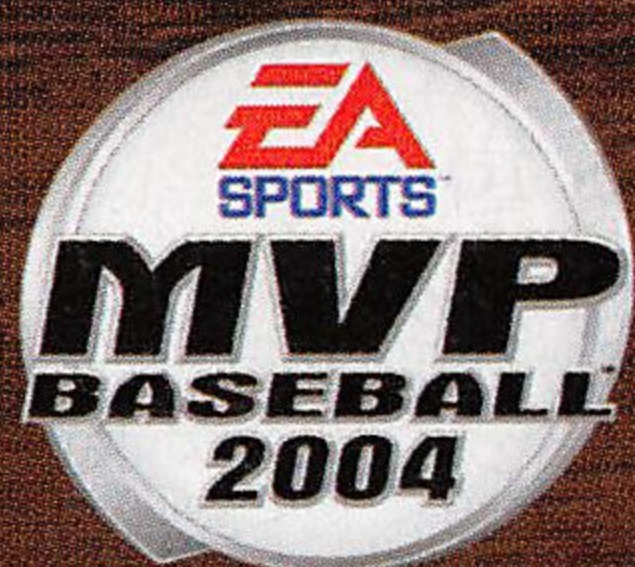
SEEN TWO STRAIGHT CURVES.
SEEN TWO STRAIGHT CURVES.

THINK FASTBALL? NAH.
THINK FASTBALL? NAH.

THINK SLIDER.
THINK SLIDER.

SEE IT.
SEE IT.

SAY HELLO.
SAY HELLO.



EA SPORTS™ PURE SWING SYSTEM

It's called the Pure Swing System. Analyze and adjust to different pitches, different pitchers, game situations and the elements. Say Hello to the most realistic baseball experience ever at mvpbaseball2004.com.



PlayStation 2





It's in the Game.™

SAY GOODBYE.

Online and Multiplayer game play available for the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system and PC only. INTERNET CONNECTIVITY required. PlayStation 2 console online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. All features not available on all platforms. See back of game pack for details.
© 2004 Electronic Arts Inc. Electronic Arts, EA SPORTS, the EA SPORTS logo, MVP Baseball and "It's in the Game" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. Major League Baseball trademarks and copyrights are used with permission of Major League Baseball Properties, Inc. Visit the official web site at MLB.com. © MLBPA. Official Licensee - Major League Baseball Players Association. Visit the Players Choice on the web at www.bigleaguers.com. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either trademarks or registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.™, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. EA SPORTS™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand.

FREEDOM ISN'T FREE

THE BEST SHOOTER

"IT'S A MUST-HAVE TITLE."

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

**"THIS IS THE ONLINE TITLE YOU
HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR."**

GAME INFORMER

**"GORGEOUS MASTERPIECE
THAT'S PEERLESS IN ITS CLASS."**

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY



LEAD AN ELITE TEAM OF COUNTER-TERRORISM OPERATIVES THROUGH 15 ALL-NEW MISSIONS AGAINST A NEW BREED OF TERRORISTS ARMED WITH ENHANCED AI TACTICS.



GROUNDBREAKING VOICE COMMAND TECHNOLOGY LETS YOU INSTANTLY ISSUE 89 ORDERS TO YOUR SQUAD, LIKE "OPEN AND FRAG" AND "BREACH AND CLEAR."



TEAM UP WITH A FRIEND IN INTENSE SPLIT-SCREEN CO-OP MISSIONS, OR BATTLE HEAD-TO-HEAD AGAINST OPPONENTS IN ACTION-PACKED ONLINE BATTLES.

COMING TO PLAYSTATION®2 IN MARCH



WWW.RAINBOWSIX3.COM



© 2003-2004 Red Storm Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Ubisoft, the Ubisoft logo, and the Soldier Icon are trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the U.S. a Ubisoft Entertainment company. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires logo are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo, and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks

AVAILABLE
ON ANY SYSTEM

 Tom Clancy's
RAINBOW SIX 3



PlayStation®2



UBISOFT™

and/or other countries. Rainbow Six, Red Storm, and Red Storm Entertainment are trademarks of Red Storm Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Red Storm Entertainment, Inc. is internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

Konami's 2004 Games

EXPOSE



Koji Igarashi is best known for the classic *Castlevania* series. Now he's trying something new on PS2 with *NanoBreaker*, and PSM sat down with the famed director/producer to find out more about his latest project — but also his future plans for the Belmont clan.

N
A
N
O
B
R
E
A
K
E
R

PSM: When did you start work on the game, and how long have you had the idea for the game?

KOJI IGARASHI: We probably started production last year, in January. During the course of creating *Castlevania*, we also started thinking about creating a new product. We really wanted to make sure that we learned from the experience of creating *Castlevania* on PS2 and apply it to a new product. I was asked to do something with a little more violence. There's various ways to do violence, but we're talking about a game, and we just wanted to make sure it felt right. In *Castlevania*, we made sure that it felt right to the player to control the character. *NanoBreaker* takes that idea, but also extends it to how the enemies react in the game.

PSM: Do you plan on turning this into a series like you did with *Castlevania*?

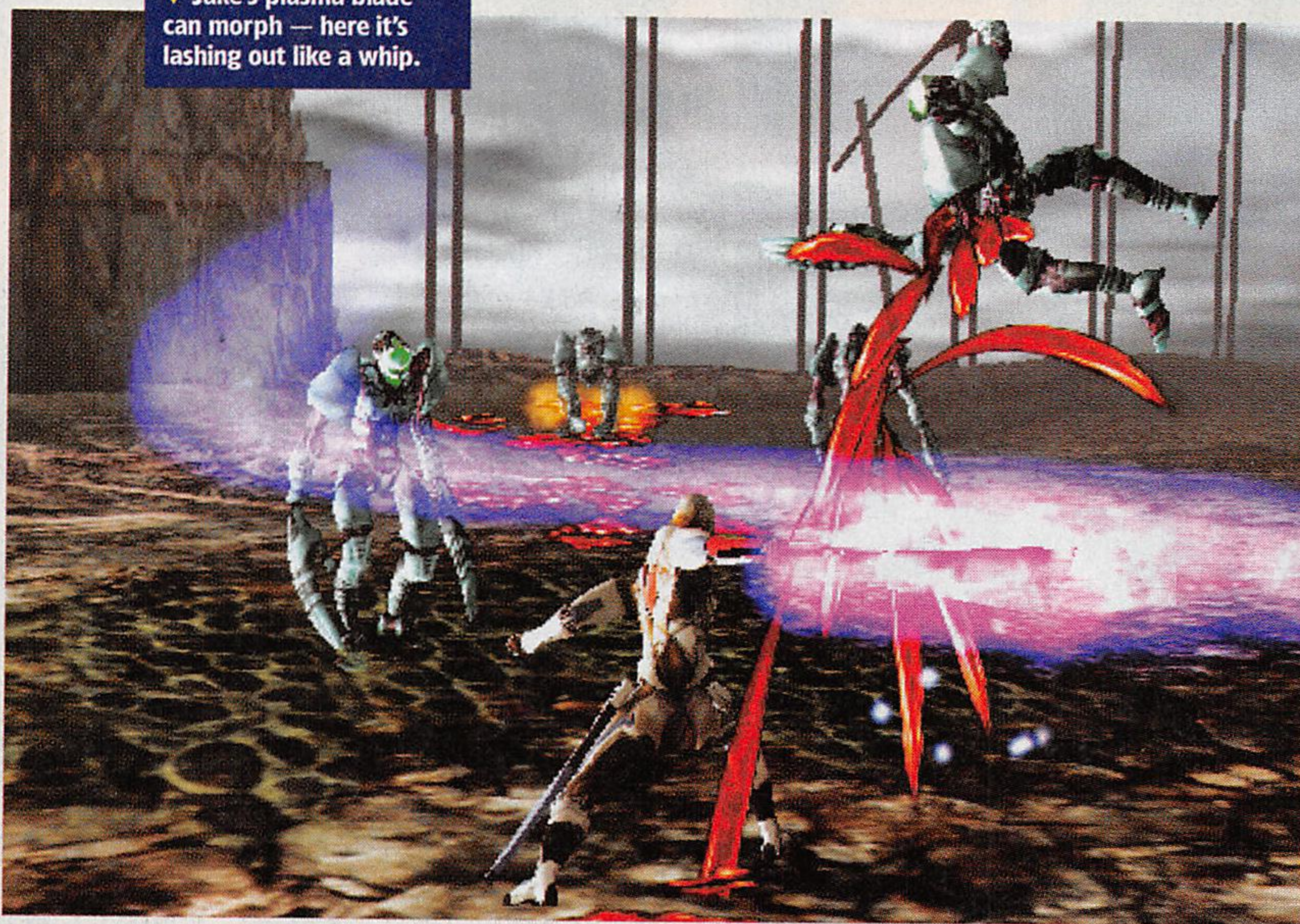
IGA: Certainly. We want to create a new franchise. When you create a game, you certainly don't want to create a one-off that has no franchise potential.

PSM: Why create a new PS2 franchise at this point, rather than wait for PlayStation 3?

IGA: When you start to make games, it takes time and experience to work on any hardware. By having two different teams — the *Castlevania* team and the *NanoBreaker* team — you can build upon a technology and keep it going. *Castlevania: Lament of Innocence* was my first PlayStation 2 title, so it's not like "Why now?" it's more like "Because I've gotten here and now I need to try something new."

PSM: Will the game be more or less linear than *Lament of Innocence* was?

▼ Jake's plasma blade can morph — here it's lashing out like a whip.



There's various ways to do violence, but we're talking about a game, and we just wanted to make sure it felt right.

IGA: In *NanoBreaker*, there are going to be more instances where you'll need to build up your abilities before you go to a new place. When you start out, you're very limited in where you can go because you don't have those abilities or items yet. *NanoBreaker* is probably more like *Castlevania: Symphony of the Night* in style.

PSM: Can we expect Jake's abilities to be able to be upgraded like in *Symphony of the Night*? I think we may have seen a bit of that from the demo where he was "growing wings."

IGA: Certainly you can expect Jake to be upgraded. That's why he's a cyborg. (Laughs) Those weren't wings you saw — they're his heat exhaust system.

PSM: Can Jake interact with the environment using his plasma blade?

IGA: You saw some hint of that already with the capture ability allowing you to pull objects towards you. We're not sure of all the things you'll be able to do yet. Obviously, simple things like switches will be activated with the plasma blade.

PSM: What about swinging like in *Castlevania*?

IGA: We've considered it, but we're not sure yet.

PSM: Will Jake be the only playable character in the game?

IGA: We can't say yet. (grin)

PSM: Do you have anything in mind for PSP?

IGA: Right now it's hard to say since we don't know what the final specs are going to be. If it turns into a good 2D machine, then sure, maybe *Castlevania* or *NanoBreaker* as a 2D game, but first we need to find out what the technology is capable of.

PSM: Now that you have two teams working on PS2, what about adding a third team for another new game on PS2?

IGA: We'll figure that out when I have time. (laughs)

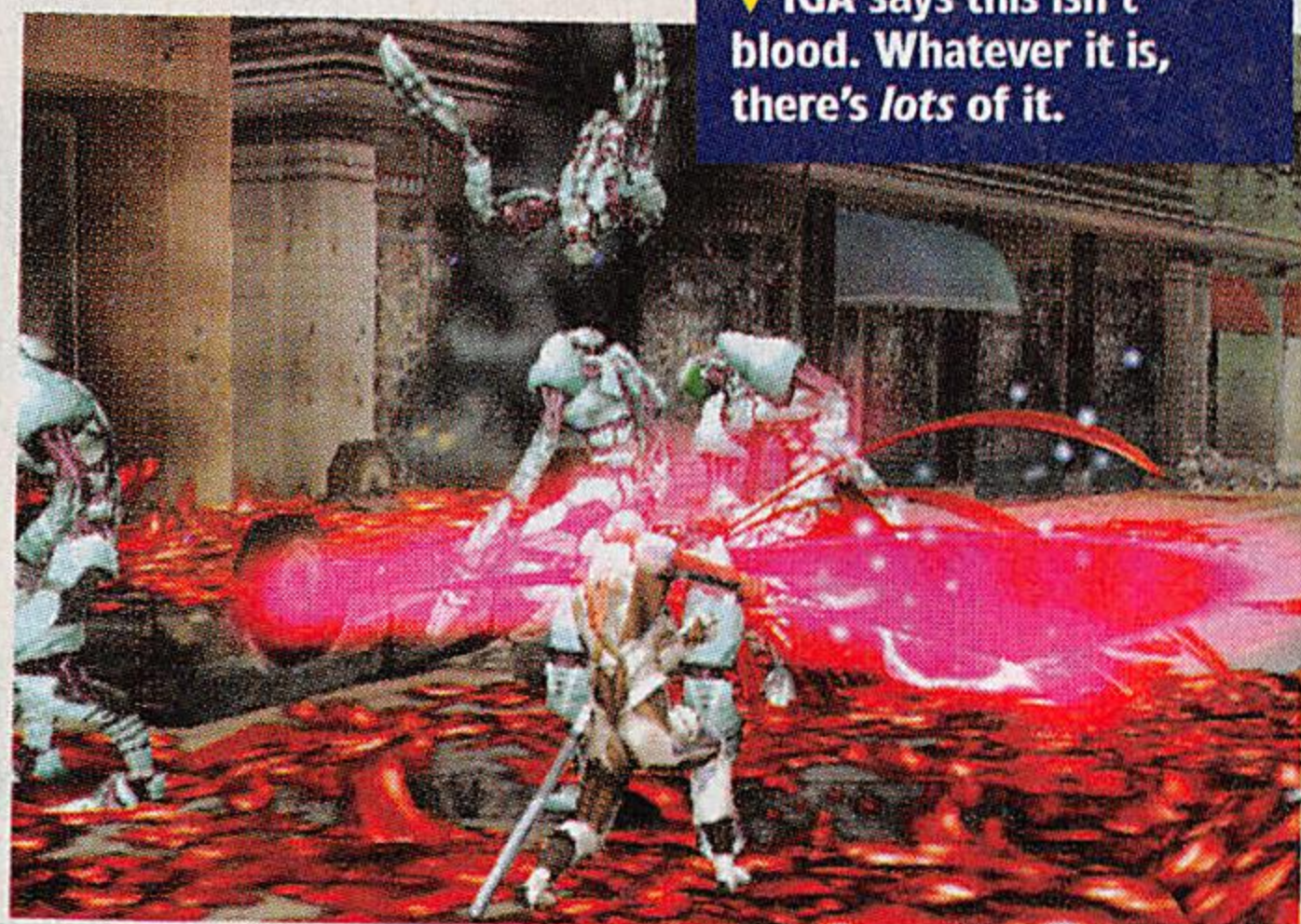
PSM: With most of your attention being spent on *NanoBreaker*, what does that mean for the future of *Castlevania*?

IGA: *Castlevania*'s a franchise! I plan to do more...

PSM: Do those plans include PS2? (grin)

IGA: We'll leave that up to your imagination, but I am the producer of the *Castlevania* series, so... (laughs)

▼ IGA says this isn't blood. Whatever it is, there's lots of it.





NANOBREAKER



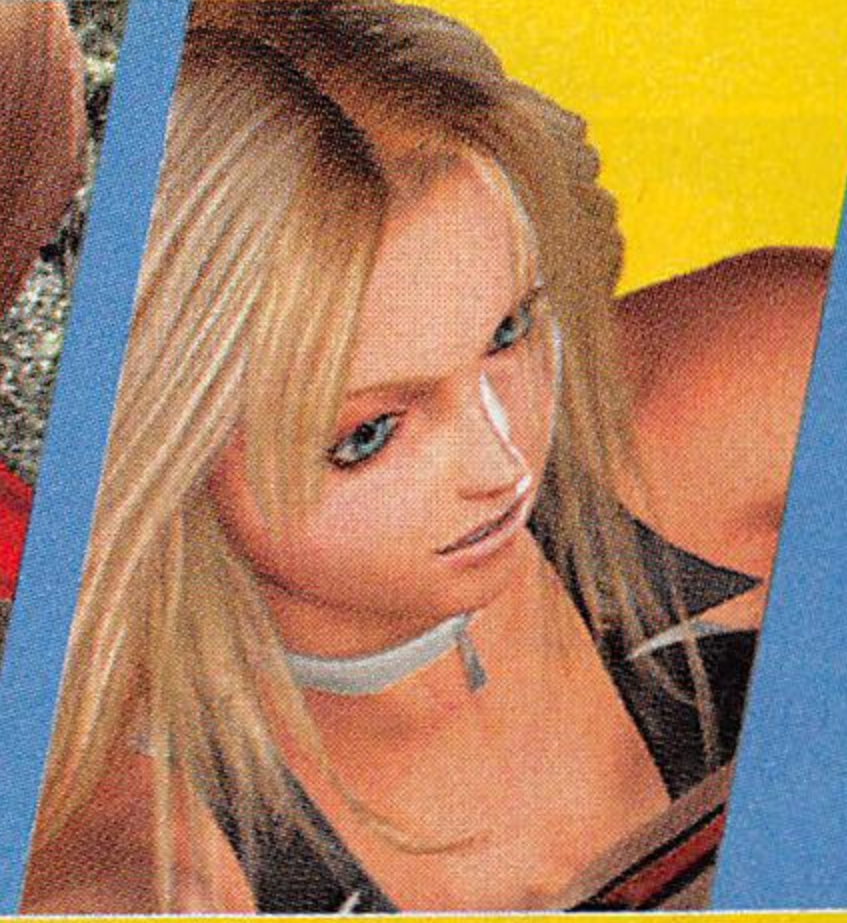
NEO CONTRA



SILENT HILL 4



SUIKODEN IV



WWX: RUMBLE ROSE

Konami's classic horror series is back, but it's definitely not just a prettier version of the last game, and series producer/composer Akira Yamaoka explains.

PSM: What are you doing to make this *Silent Hill* really stand apart from the ones before it?

AKIRA YAMAOKA: The primary difference is that in the previous titles, you were exploring within the vast map of the game, but in the *Silent Hill 4*, you are in your room and you find a kind of tunnel that takes you to a spooky world. Basically you're going back and forth between worlds in part four. Another difference is that in the previous *Silent Hill* games, you basically ended up in alternate world, a very strange world, for no reason. In *Silent Hill 4*, you are motivated to get out of your room, so you are not passive, you are active.

PSM: So you find a "portal" in your bathroom...

AY: Yes. Every time you go through the portal, you complete a mission, then you come back. You rest for a while, then you go back through the tunnel again, but to a different place.

PSM: When you go through the hole and you come out, do you always come out in *Silent Hill*?

AY: Some places are, some places aren't.

PSM: Is the main character connected with characters from the previous games?

AY: The main character, Henry Townshend, has never appeared in the *Silent Hill* series, but as you play the game, there might be a scene where you see some connection to the other *Silent Hill* games.

PSM: Are there a lot more new creatures or will you see a lot of the older ones from the last games?

AY: All the creatures are brand new.

PSM: Is there a difficulty adjustment for the fighting and the puzzles again?

AY: Yes, like the last one, there will be three different difficulties both in action and puzzle solving.

PSM: Can you talk a little about the additions and changes you've made to the combat?

AY: There are two main new features. One is that when you hit something, it's like when you play a golf game. There's a gauge; when you press one button, the gauge starts to increase and when you stop, the strength of your swing will depend on how much of the gauge you filled. So when you beat something up, you can always adjust your strength. That's one difference. The second difference is that when you change your weapon, you don't have to go to the

item screen. Before, you had to go to a sub-menu, but now you can change your weapon in real time. You'll see your selection of weapons at the bottom of the screen, so you can do it very easily.

PSM: Is there a specific reason that you can adjust the power of your swing?

AY: We wanted the players to feel more rewarded when fighting. You could simply press the X button and keep beating, but I think it would be fun to test your strength. For example, when trying to escape from a monster: while you're turning back you can swing upward, then pull back as hard as you can, then give a big blow. When you make contact, I think that will make for a lot of fun.

PSM: Will you still be able to tell when monsters are nearby?

AY: No — this time you won't have a radio that checks for monsters around you. You'll have radio in your room that will function as something.



▲ Even though it's early, this is already the creepiest *Silent Hill* yet.

PSM: Are there any other new tricks, like psychological tricks to make the character afraid or the character go insane or anything like that?

AY: I wish I could say right now. I really want to say, but I'm being told not to say until E3.

PSM: Have you ever thought of remaking the first *Silent Hill* with new graphics for those who are starting to get into the series now?

AY: At this time, I don't wish to do a remake. The reason is because some people say that *Silent Hill 3* was like a return to *Silent Hill 1*. What I want to do is not simply re-make *Silent Hill 1*, but do thing which the team could not do back when they were making *Silent Hill 1*.

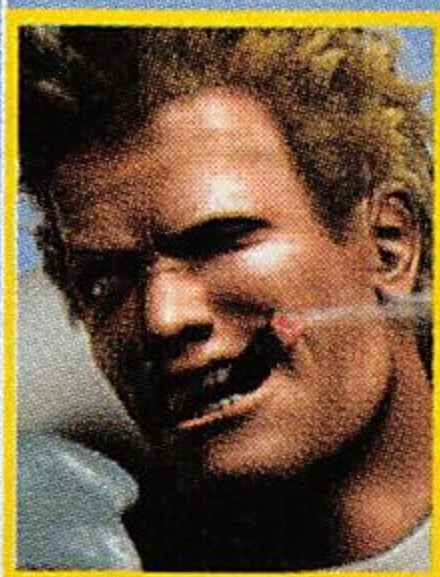
PSM: Back to *Silent Hill 4*, have you created a new graphics engine for the game?

AY: We are using a "remodeled" version of the graphics engine that was used in *Silent Hill 3*.

PSM: Will there be multiple endings in the game, and how do you expect it to compare in terms of overall length?

AY: Well, there will be multiple endings. The second question, as to how that will affect the game length, the length of overall gameplay in *Silent Hill 4* is longer than that of *Silent Hill 3*. We are doing things like making the puzzles more connected to the overall story. You won't feel like you're doing your homework. (laughs)





NEO CONTRA

Nabuyo Nakazato loved the *Contra* series so much, he went to work for Konami. After creating two great installments during the 16-bit era, and *Shattered Soldier* on PS2, he's ready to reinvent the series for a new generation.

PSM: What led you to go with a new viewpoint in *Neo Contra*?

NN: By having an isometric view, we give the player more freedom of movement, and also can create more depth where the interaction between the players and the enemies are concerned.

PSM: Will certain trademark *Contra* gameplay elements, such as hanging while shooting, or laying down while shooting, be in the game?

NN: No. In making a totally new game, you definitely have to give up some things, but we're working on new play mechanics to make up for these changes.

PSM: Will we see a lot of point-of-view transitions during each level?

NN: Yes, we'll mix things up a lot during the levels — but it won't just be like a collection of mini-games. It'll be very seamless.

PSM: How are the game's story and characters connected to the past *Contra* titles?

NN: The story is set after *Shattered Soldier*. I can't tell you who the enemy is, but you will see a past

character appear in an "unexpected situation." Basically, Bill Rizer is once again the main character, just like in *Shattered Soldier*.

PSM: The samurai character looks really cool — can he actually use his katana in gameplay?

NN: Originally, we weren't really too concerned with the character of Jaguar; we were just viewing him as "player two." But now the team has gotten very excited about him, so we're definitely thinking of ways to set him apart gameplay-wise from Bill Rizer.

PSM: How does the weapon selection work?

NN: You can set up your various weapons at the beginning of each stage, but as you play, you'll have the opportunity to unlock more.

PSM: Will each character have weapons only they can use?

NN: No — the series has always been based around both players having the same capabilities.

PSM: How is the game laid out? Will there be one level, a cinema, another level, and so on?

NN: Some stages will be unlocked from the very beginning, like in *Shattered Soldier*, so you can select your starting point. When you beat those levels, others open up.

PSM: Will there be multiple difficulty settings this time around?



▼ *Neo Contra* introduces a new perspective, but retains the series' feel.

NN: Yes! (laughs)

PSM: What exactly are those creatures we see the characters riding in the screenshots?

NN: Originally, the development team wanted to have the characters riding on motorcycles. Then someone said "How about horses?" Finally, our artists said "No, how about dinosaurs?" So they are dinosaurs. (laughs)

PSM: Have you thought about online cooperative play at all?

NN: As a gamer, I'm very interested in online gameplay, but *Neo Contra* will be an offline game. The overall design lends more to being an online game, though, so maybe you'll see us do something like that in the near future.



▲ This time around, the game's story will focus on one main character.

Junko Kawano is one busy lady. Not only is she the producer of *Suikoden IV*, but she's also its character designer and scenario writer, so she's in charge of the game's look, feel, and story. Whew!

Kawano-san took time out of her busy schedule to talk about her latest work, online RPGs, and what she'd like to do in the future.

PSM: Can you talk about how this *Suikoden* is connected to the past games? How much can you say about that right now?

JUNKO KAWANO: It's the same world, but the area is very far from where the previous titles took place. So that's the difference.

PSM: What things are going to set this game apart from past *Suikodens*?

JK: The ocean's the big thing, the sailing — that's the main theme of this *Suikoden*.

PSM: In this *Suikoden*, are you primarily focusing on one character?

JK: That's right, we focus on one main character, and the relationship between the main character and the Rune of Punishment, which gives its bearer great power, but also eats away at them.

PSM: Can you talk about any fundamental changes you're making to the combat system?

JK: The battle system is a little bit closer to *Suikoden I* and *II*, rather than *Suikoden III*. The emphasis is on speed this time in terms of battle, so they added a lot of new elements to the battles. It should be fun.

PSM: Will there be random battles while you're sailing on the ocean?

JK: There'll be some battles on the ocean while you're sailing. You saw it in the demo. Bigger-scale battles. But most of the combat will take place on land.

PSM: Have you created a whole new game engine for this title?

JK: Yes. It's totally different from *Suikoden III*'s.

PSM: What do you think of *Final Fantasy XI*? Have you played it?

JK: I enjoy *FFXI*, but it's really overwhelming!

PSM: Do you have any desire to work on an online role-playing game, or a massively multi-player online role-playing game along the lines of *FFXI*?

JK: I don't know if I want to make massively-multiplayer RPGs like that. It just takes too much time, and, you know, even afterwards, you have to spend a lot of time maintaining the game as well.

PSM: Would like to do the art and direct another kind of game, rather than *Suikoden* or an RPG?

JK: I like playing action games. I would like to make some action games, or RPGs in a totally different style.

PSM: Like an action-RPG, maybe?

JK: Yes.

PSM: For long-time fans of the series, will there be a benefit to having a saved game from *Suikoden III* on the memory card this time around?

JK: We're considering it. (laughs)

PSM: In terms of the overall scope and size of the game, how will it compare to the first three *Suikodens*?

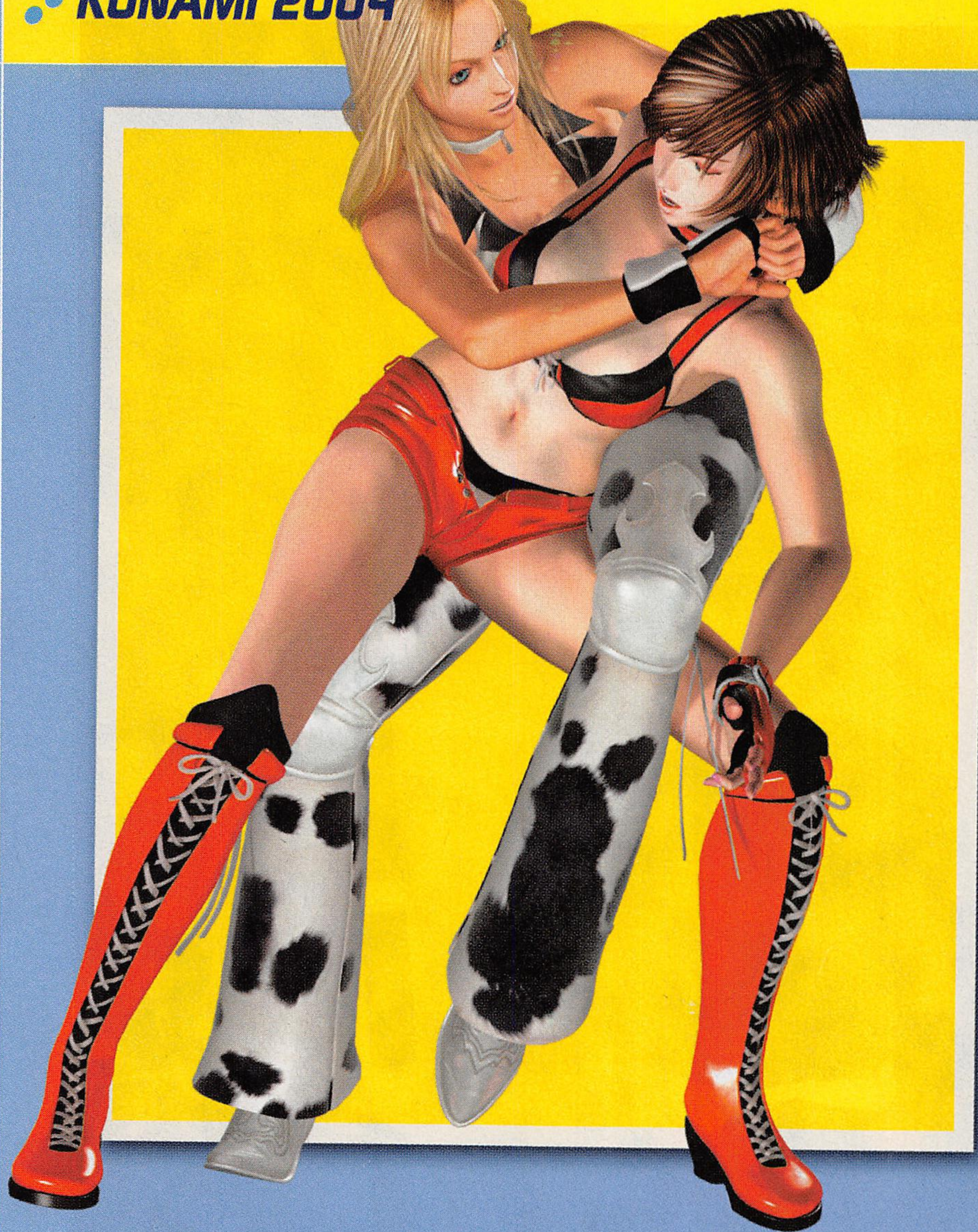
JK: The overall game world is about the same size as it was in the other three, but the time that you'll spend playing *Suikoden IV* may be a little bit less than the 100+ hours possible in *Suikoden III*.



SUIKODEN IV



I'm not a diva, but I play one on TV.



Akira Uchida might not be working on a well known franchise — in fact, he's trying to create a new one — but he's got to be the envy of every other producer at Konami. His game, *WWX: Rumble Rose*, is the PS2's first all-female wrestling game. But, as he told PSM, he wants to create some great wrestling gameplay to back-up the beautiful women.

PSM: How will this game will differ from Yuke's [*WWE SmackDown!*] previous wrestling games in overall gameplay?

AU: Obviously, one of the major elements of this game is that it's completely original, it's not tied to the real world, so we can have our characters do things that perhaps normal human beings couldn't do. It's wrestling, so you're going to be seeing a lot of over-the-top stuff, but we're actually going to have things in there that'll take it a little more over-the-top that you might normally see.

PSM: What can you tell us about the story mode? Is there one character that's the focus?

AU: The two characters we've revealed are pretty much the main lead characters for separate teams, and so the stories will center around these two characters. You'll see lots of other characters, though, who will have their own complete

story backgrounds, as well as their own destinies. Between matches, as you progress through the story mode, you'll get more glimpses into their backgrounds.

PSM: But you'll only play as one of the two main characters in story mode... ?

AU: No. All the characters have a story mode.

PSM: Does each character have very distinct moves and finishers?

AU: Of course! It wouldn't be any fun if they didn't. One of the things I've been dissatisfied about in most wrestling games is that all the characters pretty much just interchange all the moves. So it's very important to me to have a specific move set that's unique to each character.

PSM: How many characters should we expect in total?

AU: It won't be like dozens of them. Imagine a fighting game. That's a good way to consider it, but also remember that each character has a dual personality that comes about depending on your play style. One character will have two completely different personalities and move sets available, so there's a lot more gameplay volume there when that's considered.

PSM: Can you talk more about that? How does it work?

AU: The "good girl" character will have a specific style or look about her, but when you switch over to the other side, you're going to have something a lot more hard, edgy, or completely different from what you would have seen on the other.

PSM: Is the game using an entirely new engine?

AU: We're not using what Yuke's has been developing up until now, but we are utilizing their vast experience. I'm definitely not interested in mimicking the kind of control system that you've seen before. I want to make sure that core wrestling fans will be comfortable playing the game. That's very important.

PSM: Will we see the girls take damage?

AU: We're not planning to show any blood at this point, but we're planning that when somebody's getting the crap beat out of them, you'll definitely see differences.

PSM: Any interaction with the clothing?

AU: It's actually a secret, which should clue you in that you will be happy. (laughs)

PSM: How about the crowd itself? They usually look like cardboard cutouts.

AU: I hate that. Your socks are going to be blown off when you see what we're doing with the crowds. It's not like we're just pouring all of the polygons into the girls; we're also making sure that whole entire effect of the arena is right.

PSM: Will you be including "foreign objects?"

AU: Of course we want to have that. You have to have bad guys, and you have to give them lots of "materials" to do evil stuff with.

PSM: As a wrestling fan, you kind of expect certain things of the wrestling, like a cage match, or ladders, putting people through tables, things like that.

AU: They'll be a bit different from what you've seen in the past, but you can count on them.

PSM: What are your plans for the actual grappling system?

AU: I love good grappling systems. So Yuke (of Yuke's) and I sit on a daily basis and figure out the nuts and bolts of how to accomplish this.

PSM: So it'll be completely new?

AU: Yeah, basically

PSM: Any plans for online gameplay?

AU: It's really unlikely we'll be able to pull it off this time around, but it's definitely on the table for next time. Either that, or maybe I can follow this version up with a version that does go online.

PSM: Finally, what about create-a-wrestler?

AU: We don't have a complete create-a-character mode. At the minimum, we're going to have these characters be customizable. We'll be revealing more about that in the future.



WWX RUMBLE ROSE

PlayStation 2



Includes

eye play

game disc

+



EyeToy USB camera



Violence

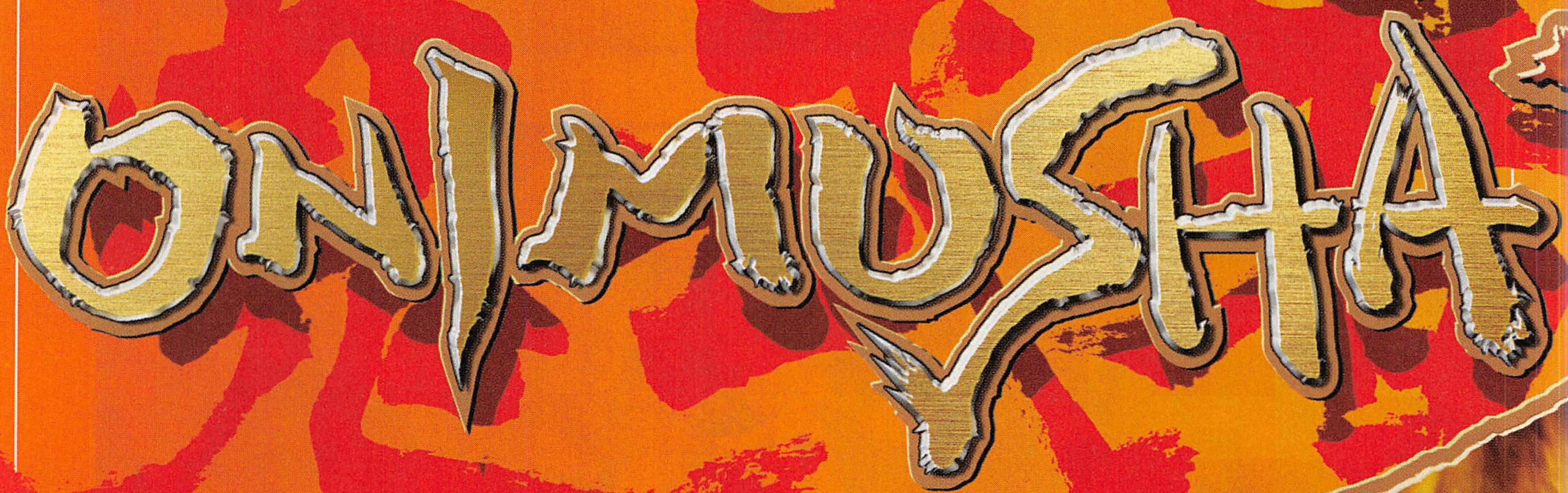
Disco Stars. One of 12 EyeToy: Play games that makes you the star. EyeToy puts you on-screen and its motion-tracking technology puts you in charge, letting your body control the action. Everyone can watch. Anyone can play. And you can **be on the TV**.

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

Screen is simulated. EyeToy™: Play. Game © 2003 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by London Studios. EyeToy and EyeToy: Play are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

ONLY IN
PSM
NEW SCREENS

ONIMUSHA



Series producers keep their blades sharp with ambitious new *Demon Siege*



FOR A FRANCHISE THAT BEGAN its life as a *Resident Evil*-inspired side project on PSOne, *Onimusha* and its sequel, *Samurai's Destiny*, have gone on to become two of the most successful titles for PlayStation 2 so far. Loaded with some of the best visual images that the system has to offer, the series has also been blessed with a stellar mix of adventure and action elements that are so effective, it's earned plenty of accolades from consumers and critics alike.

Onimusha 3 Demon Siege • Publisher/Developer Capcom • Max Players: 1 • Release Date: Summer 2004 • ESRB: Mature



Though the franchise happened to spawn from ideas first explored by the Umbrella crew in the depths of Raccoon City, *Onimusha* itself has managed to arouse several inspirational children of its own: with a copious amount of obvious, but solid knock-offs and more directly influenced titles like *Devil May Cry* and *Blade Warriors* rounding out the lineup. To say that the series has been an important aspect of the PlayStation 2's software library is definitely a serious understatement, and to think that we'd only ever see two of them is to underestimate the power of its popularity.

To hammer that point home, Capcom's production studio 2 has been hard at work at putting the finishing touches on its third elaborate action/adventure epic, *Onimusha 3 Demon Siege*. Easily the most ambitious and technically complete of the three chronicles of Oda Nobunaga, this third and final chapter of the *Onimusha* trilogy not only appears to be the strongest title in the series, but also seems to be a favorite early contender as one of the best games of the 2004.

FATE IS IN HEAVEN

One of the most obvious points of interest for *Onimusha 3* is its unusual and somewhat confusing storyline. Though the previous two games were known for their combination of historical fact and supernatural fiction, *Demon Siege* attempts to rewrite its own tale by introducing the notion of multiple characters, time travel, and fairy-like spirit guide that bridges the gap between the two eras. Bizarre as it may sound, it certainly seems to work and has left us wanting more with each new development.

The game begins in 1582 with one of the most breathtaking opening sequences that we've ever seen (see sidebar) and focuses on *Onimusha: Warlords* returning hero Samanosuke Akechi. In brilliant stealthy form, Samanosuke infiltrates the massive walking ship-fortress of Gogandantess (from *Onimusha 2*) and duels with all sorts of evil bad guys (from minions to giants to Gogandantess himself). After successfully destroying the fortress' soul-powered engine and decimating an entire platoon of Nobunaga's henchman, Samanosuke defiantly slays his foe with a single thrust of his sword and eliminating forever Nobunaga's bodyguard and previous protection. Akechi now has the opening he's looking for.

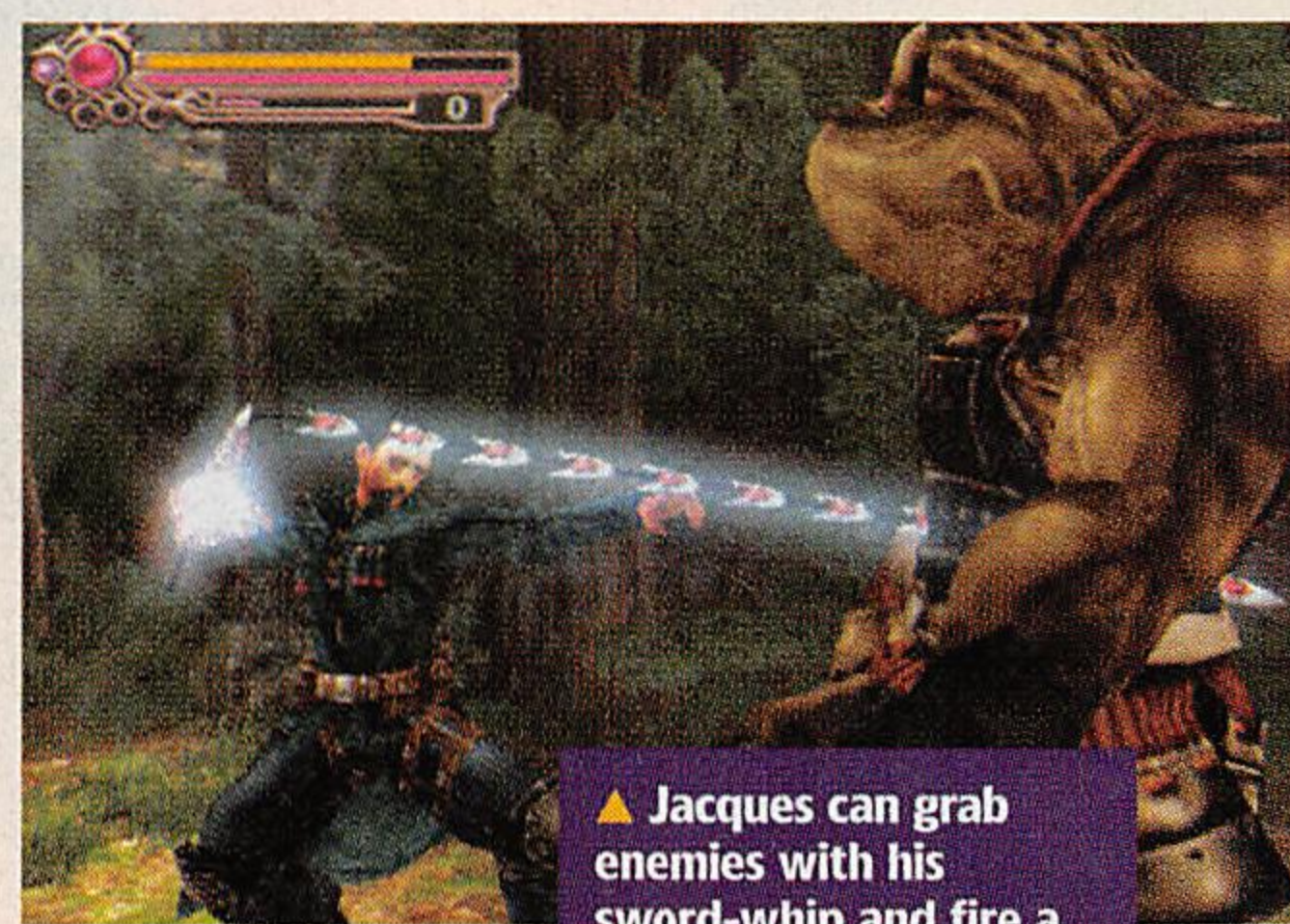
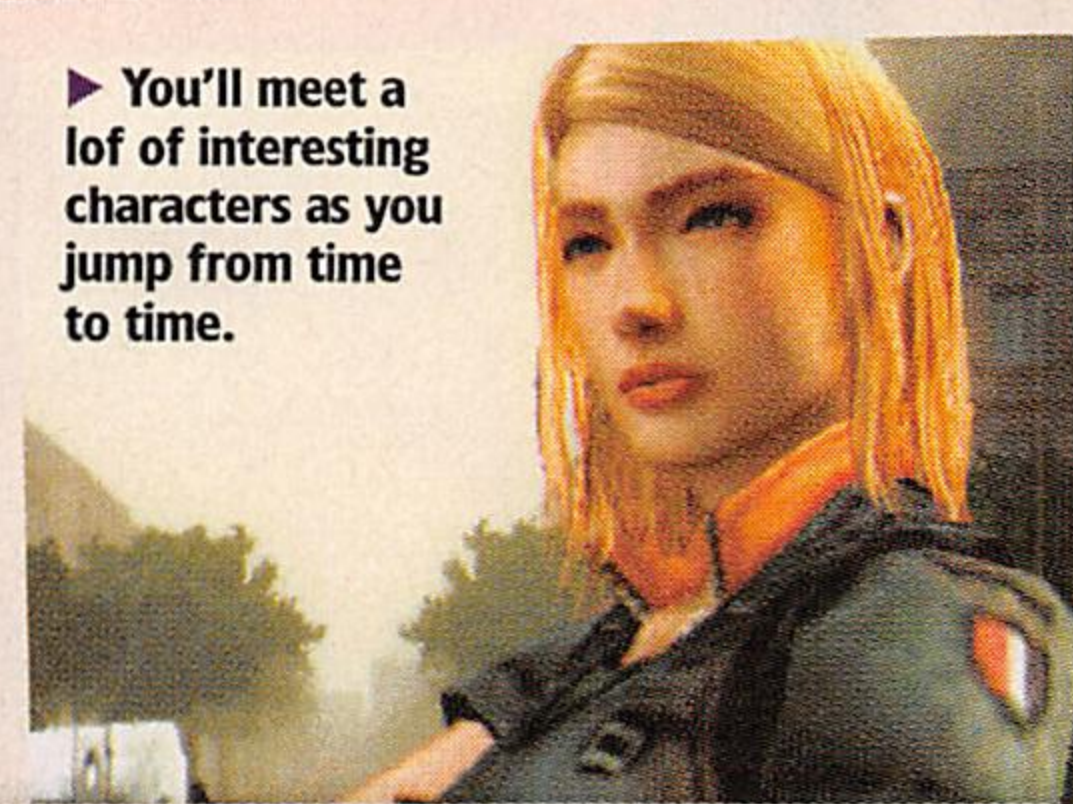
It's from this moment that

Spotlight: Takeshi Kaneshiro

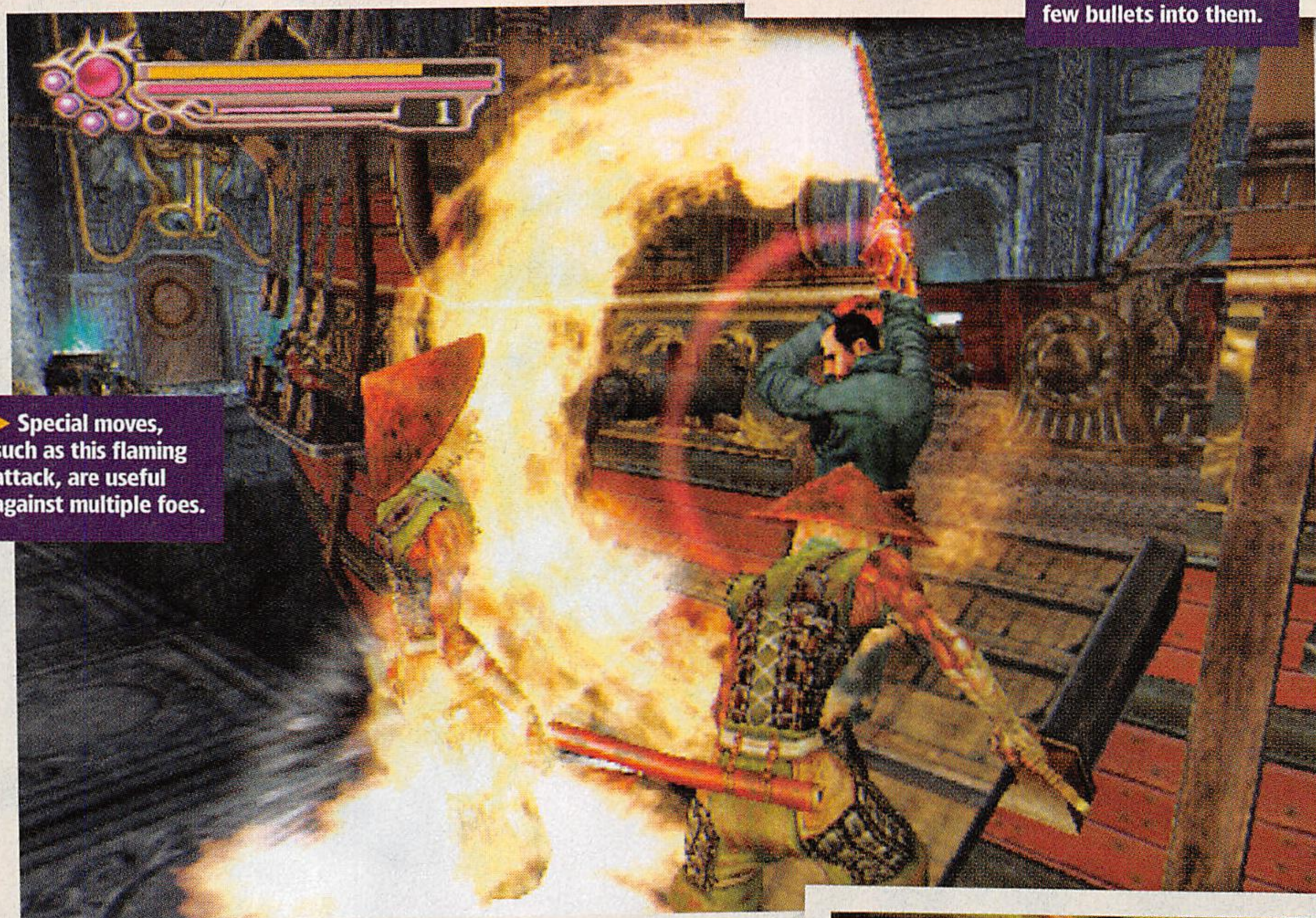
Though he started his career as a teen idol in the Chinese entertainment circuit, the half-Taiwanese/half-Japanese star of *Onimusha 1* and *3* has quickly become one of the most popular movie stars in all of Asia. Particularly famous in his adopted homeland of Japan, Kaneshiro has participated in such high profile films as *The House of Flying Daggers*, *Don't Give a Damn*, *Space Travelers*, and *Hero*. In-between movie shoots, he continues plished pop singer and has managed to retain a refreshing humility when it comes to his impressive level of fame.



► You'll meet a lot of interesting characters as you jump from time to time.



▲ Jacques can grab enemies with his sword-whip and fire a few bullets into them.



► Special moves, such as this flaming attack, are useful against multiple foes.



▲ It wouldn't be much of an *Onimusha* game if there wasn't some sort of disturbing, yet sexy, female character to fight.

◀ You can still absorb escaping souls in order to upgrade your weapons and armor.



► If you time your strike just right, you might just be able to split your enemy right in two. We don't think there's a more rewarding feeling.



▲ Just like in the past two games, these special orbs will endow your characters with cool, new weapons.



▲ One can easily say that the variety of creatures in this game is the greatest of the series. You don't often find yourself fighting the same thing over and over again.

Spotlight: Jean Reno

Spanish in heritage, but raised in Africa and France, Jean Reno is one of the few actors who is recognized everywhere across the globe. An accomplished stage and film actor, Reno first came into the spotlight with his effective stone-faced roles in *La Femme Nikita* and *Leon the Professional*, followed by appearances in huge blockbuster movies like *Mission: Impossible* and *Godzilla*. He was even offered the role of Agent Smith in the *Matrix* movies before eventually declining to film something else. Hugo Weaving must love him.

the player assumes control of the action. Accompanied in battle by a group of fellow soldiers and opponents to Nobunaga's evil reign, the whole first level serves plays out as you battle alongside your comrades and invade the premises of Nobunaga's dwelling at Honnoji Temple. But just as Nobunaga and Samanosuke begin what should be their final duel, a bizarre time distortion appears out of nowhere and sends Akechi out of Japan and into the France of 2004.

Before the action picks up with Samanosuke again, however, the second part of the tale begins. A horde of demons from Nobunaga's time overruns the streets of Paris, killing anything and everything that moves. This wave of demonic force demolishes the police and the citizens they protect faster than any human could; leaving only the esteemed office Jacques Braun (played by *Mission: Impossible* star Jean Reno) left. It appears that the demons have nearly conquered the town, and it's then that you assume control of Jacques and his machine gun in modern times as well.

Sadly, Jacques quickly runs out of bullets and appears to be primed for the slaughter when Samanosuke comes out of nowhere to save him. But before the two men can speak at length, there's another time disturbance and Jacques is thrown back to Akechi's territory in 1582; leaving Samanosuke stranded here in our modern times. From here, the main focus of the game is two-fold, as both men try to determine why they're lost in time and how they can defeat Nobunaga while trying to make things right again. Convoluted? Yes. Intriguing? Most definitely.

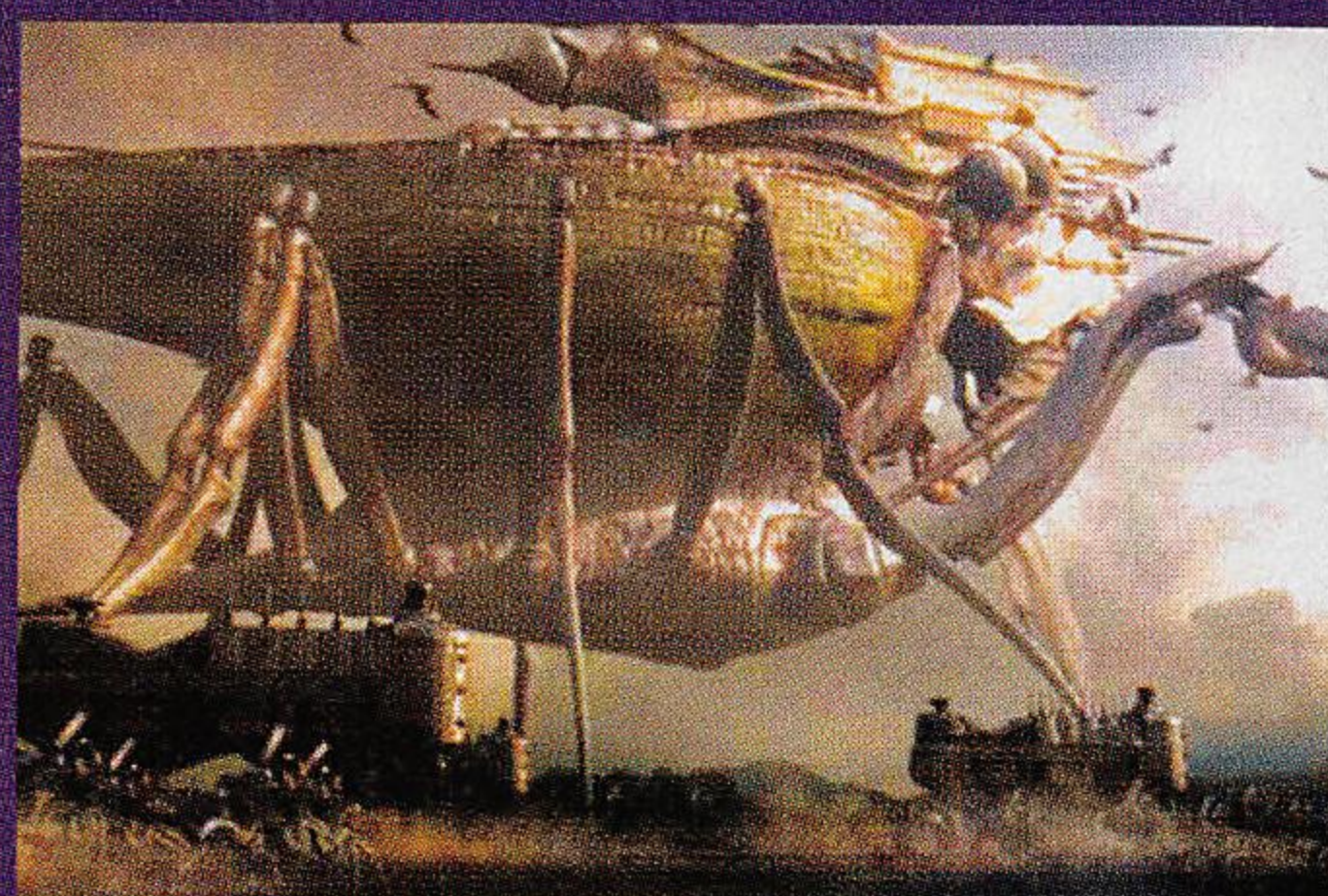
FULL CONTROL

To help tell the story more effectively and push the series forward, while maintaining the core elements that made *Onimusha* what it is, Capcom has made a number of significant technical changes. Rather than use the pre-rendered backgrounds found in the first two games, for instance, the developers have made each environment completely three-dimensional; allowing for more interactivity with your surroundings, which provides the groundwork for an even more important technical adjustment: full analog control.

Though the classic *Resident Evil* scheme is still available for players who enjoy that sort of approach, the analog option is a much more flexible beast. Not only is this configuration less

Greatest CG Intro Ever?

We've seen some unbelievable computer generated movies in our time (*Final Fantasy VIII* and *Code Veronica X* immediately spring to mind), but none of them have ever looked as impressive as the opening movie to *Onimusha 3*. Created in conjunction with Hong Kong action king Donnie Yen, the opening was an elaborate production that was more than a year in the making. Handled by the renowned team at Robot, the six-minute intro spanned 10-full days of motion-capture. Each model took two to three months to build and the planning and animation took well over a year apiece. The result is something truly impressive.



▼ With a deeper storyline and a lot of time travel, gamers can expect *Onimusha 3* to be one of the more-epic, action experiences of 2004.

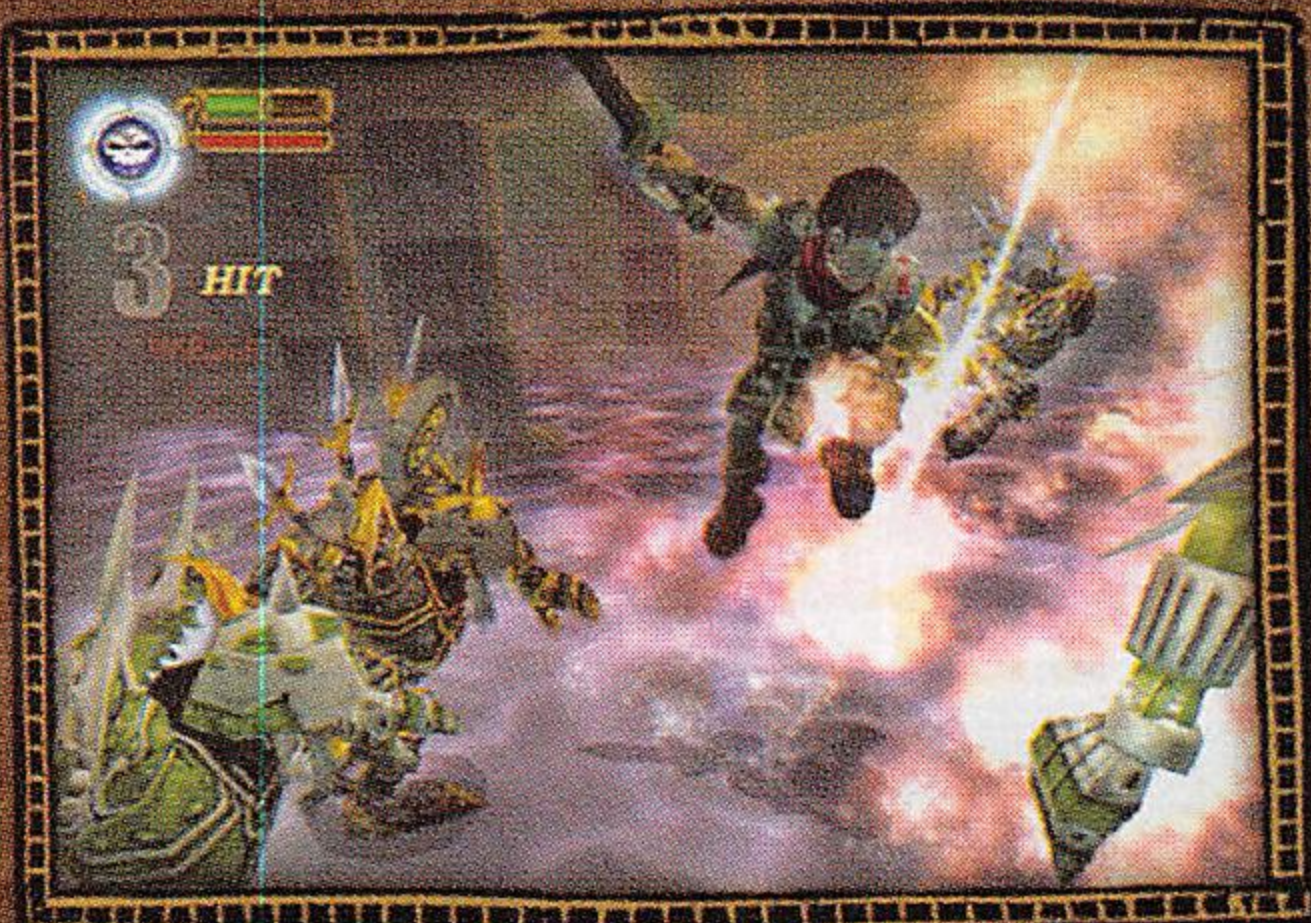


▲ Jacques' weapons all feature long-range attacks, so he can reach opponents at quite a distance away from him.

◀ We've always loved the past boss designs in the series and *Onimusha 3* certainly doesn't disappoint in that area, either.

MAXIMO ARMY OF ZIN™

MAXIMO
IS BACK
AND THIS TIME
IT'S WAR.



Arsenal of devastating combos and attacks.

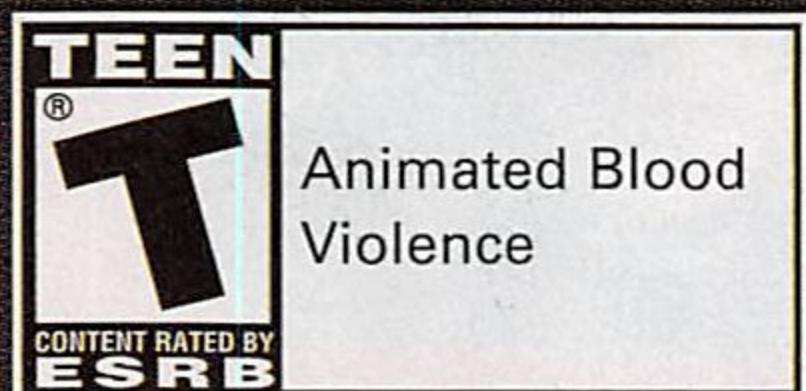


Army of Zin declare war on the living.



Unleash the terrifying power of Grim.

AVAILABLE JANUARY 2004



PlayStation 2

CAPCOM
CAPCOM.COM/MAXIMO

© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003. © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2003. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Capcom and the Capcom Logo are registered trademarks of Capcom Co., Ltd. Maximo vs. Army of Zin is a trademark of Capcom Co., Ltd. CHARACTER BY © 2003 SUSUMU MATSUSHITA COMPANY/MASTER LICENSOR. DREAM RANCH INC. Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment America for use with the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

inclined to suddenly force you to switch directions in the middle of camera angle adjustment, it's a lot easier to maneuver your character in tight spaces as well. On the whole, it gives the game a lot more speed and urgency, as the number of stages you explore and frequency of enemies you fight have increased beyond what we've used to in the series.

Happily, enemies themselves appear to be much smarter than we've seen before and even manage to employ basic group tactics and a higher resistance to player attacks from the very first stage. The boss characters are incredibly hard to take down, especially a certain disgusting two-headed monstrosity, and the robot (yes, we said robot) from Paris, who is a relentless master of munitions. And to keep things even more difficult and balanced, Capcom has made upgrading your weaponry a lot more expensive and added a couple of powerful one-hit kills for dramatic effect.

WHIP IT GOOD

Of course, the biggest gameplay addition is the inclusion of the second character, Jacques. Completely different from Samanosuke in how he plays, Jacques' energy-powered whip weapon is the key to taking down the increased number of airborne opponents and large groups of enemies that approach from afar.

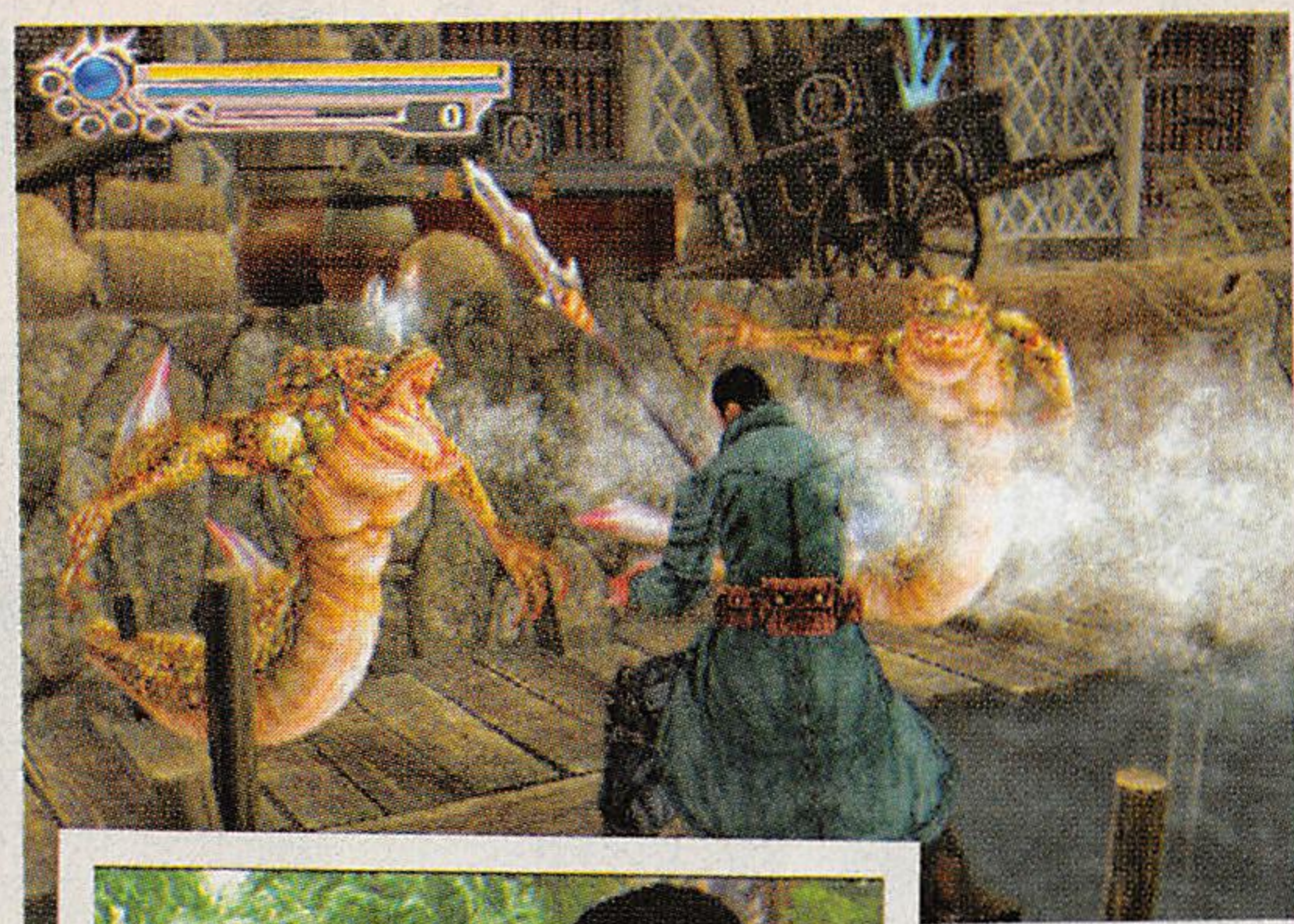
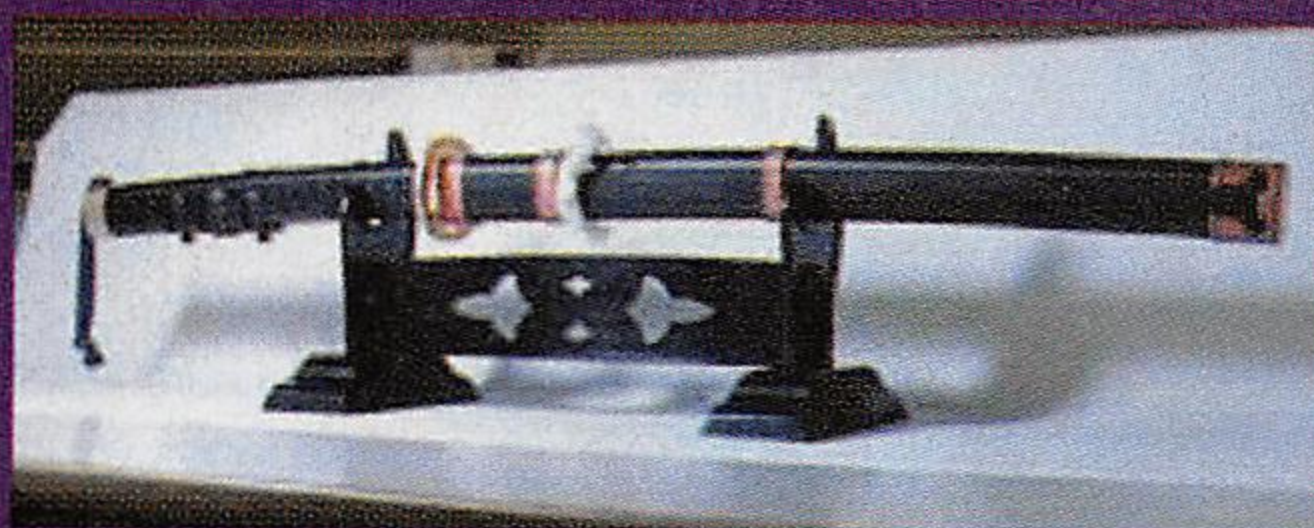
Even more importantly, however, the whip allows Jacques to swing across chasms, climb inaccessible areas, and find hidden sections of each stage that you couldn't otherwise find. You can expect a good number of physical puzzles related to this ability and may often find that particular areas of *Onimusha* almost border on the platform genre. But purists shouldn't worry, it's still nowhere near the level of something like *Devil May Cry* or *Lament of Innocence* in that regard.

Interestingly enough, Capcom has also confirmed that there are several hidden characters and extra costumes to be unlocked as well; and while the people in charge are remaining tight lipped as to who and what they are, we've been told that they go well beyond the fan service standards set in the previous two *Onimushas*. Just what this means for us, however, remains unclear until we can find them.

Onimusha 3 Demon Siege is reported by Capcom officials to be the last chapter in the Samanosuke/Nobunaga trilogy. With a game as entertaining and engrossing as we've played so far, you'll probably hope in conjunction with us that it still has a long life ahead of it. [P]

The Soul Controller

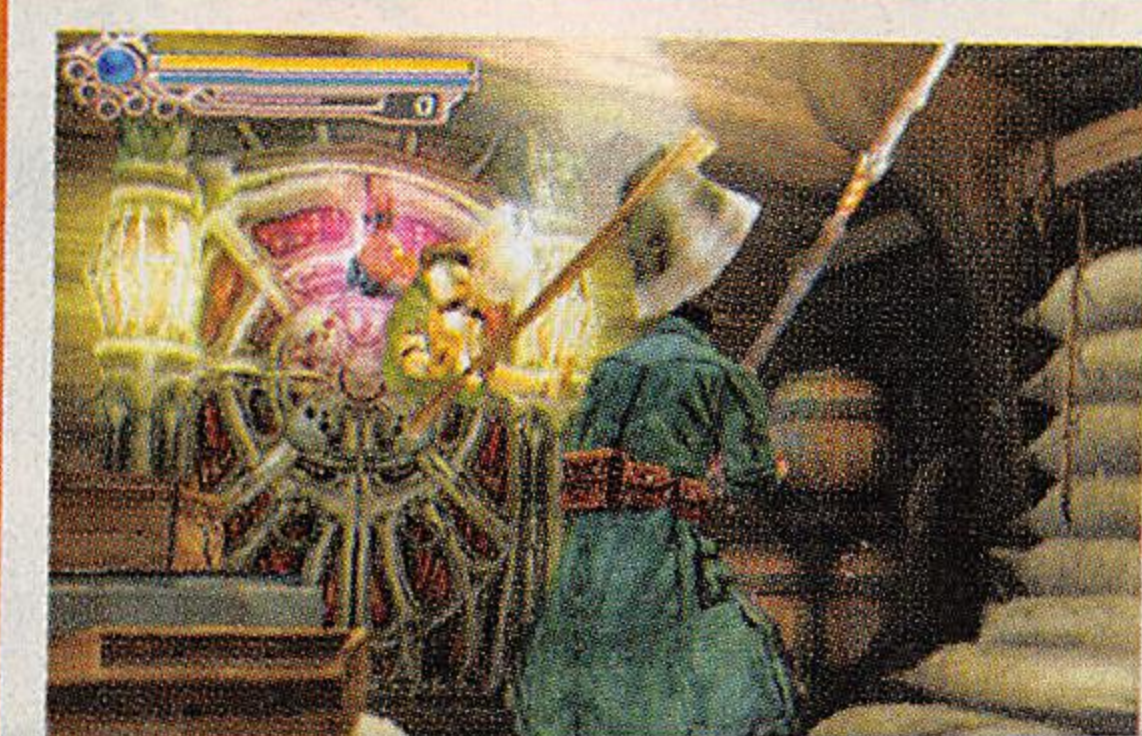
This unique peripheral from Hori (the same crew that brought us the FFX-2 Tiny Bee gun controllers) has got to be one of the coolest accessories we've ever seen. Spanning 38" in length with buttons on the hilt, this masterpiece of a manipulation device not only looks like a real sword, it ships with a stand to display it on. The bad news? It retails for about 15000 Yen (\$140 US) and will only be released in Japan.



▲ Especially in this sequel, enemies really like to surround you whenever they can.

◀ Jacques' son manages to get himself into trouble throughout the game.

▼ You'll have to battle your way through this galleon-style boat before it heads underwater.



▲ There are actually two Samanosukes in *Onimusha 3*, but we're not going to tell you why.



▲ Nobunaga's henchmen constantly show up in order to slow your progress. They fight hard and dirty.

◀ It seems that each boss is significantly larger than the previous one. Check out the size of this guy!

Akechi Who?

Samanosuke Akechi is the fictional nephew of real life samurai (and messenger) Akechi Mitsuhide (1526-1582). The man who really killed Oda Nobunaga for betraying his loyalty and servitude, Mitsuhide is one of the most respected personalities in all of Japanese history.



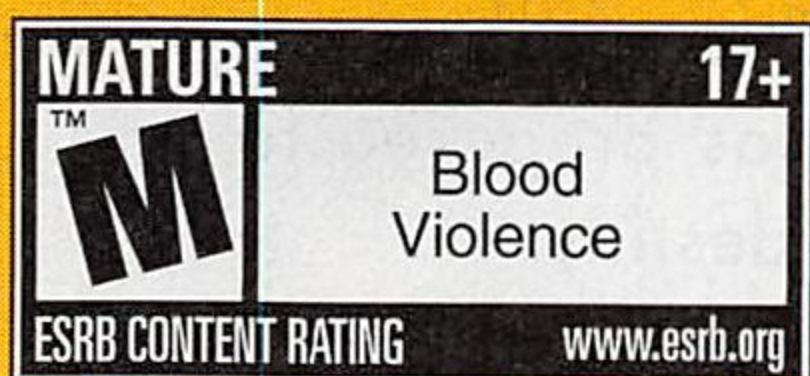
A cunning mind. A killer body.



Nightshade™



Go ahead, test her. But be warned. Beneath that sweet exterior is a hardened assassin. From vivid urban warfare to unlimited kill combos, the ultimate Ninja experience has arrived.



PlayStation®2



SEGA®
sega.com/usa

SEGA WOW™

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark office. SEGA, the SEGA logo, and Nightshade are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. © SEGA WOW/SEGA, 2003. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

koei™

www.koei.com

thanks!
25th

KOEI's 25th Anniversary

The Sword Will Shape a Man and a Nation's Destiny

SAMURAI WARRIORS™

戦国無双

TACTICAL ACTION

Time flows from day to night. Seasons change. Swords will rise and men will fall. From the creators of Kessen™ and Dynasty Warriors®, Samurai Warriors™ recounts tales of valor and betrayal in Medieval Japan. Cherry blossoms cascade onto springtime battlegrounds. Traps lay hidden in noble castles. Battle through 30 scenarios prepared to lose and you will emerge victorious. With multiple endings you have the power to change a nation's destiny.

Produced by
Ω-Force

DOLBY
DIGITAL
PRO LOGIC II

MARCH 2004

PlayStation®2



New Auto Formation System changes castle level maps each time you play!



Create and train your own character in New Officer Mode!



New Active Mission System triggers a multitude of objectives! Over 500 mission variations!

3DCGデザイナー募集中!!

勤務地:カナダまたは日本 応募方法など詳細は www.koei.co.jp/html/joboffer をご覧下さい。

Samurai Warriors, Kessen, Dynasty Warriors, and the KOEI logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of KOEI Co., Ltd. ©2004 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. "Dolby," "Pro Logic" and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories. Manufactured under license from Dolby Laboratories.



Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more ratings
information.

CONTENTS

- 78 Call Of Duty
- 79 DDR Extreme
- 80 Fight Night 2004
- 66 Gran Turismo 4
- 82 Hitman: Contracts



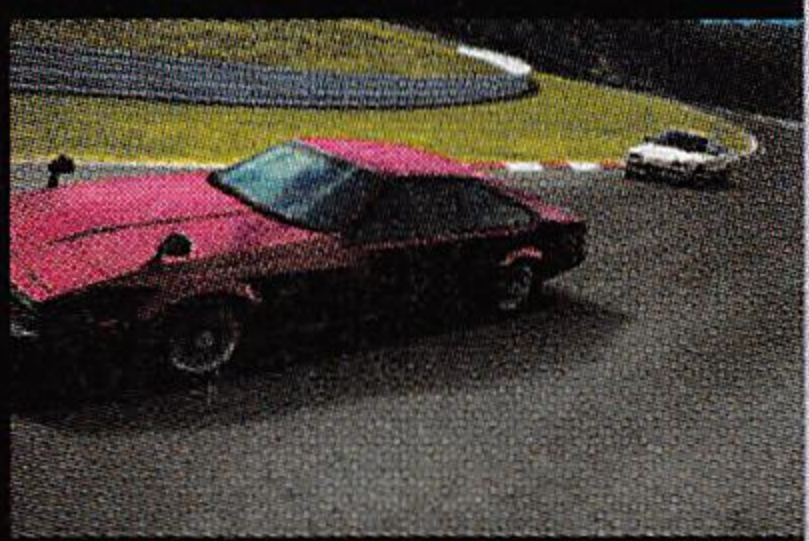
- 82 MTX: Mototrax
- 70 Nightmare Before Christmas
- 72 Nightshade
- 79 Pitfall Harry
- 64 Rainbow Six 3



- 74 Seven Samurai 20XX
- 82 Scooby Doo: Mayhem
- 73 Siren
- 80 Transformers Armada
- 78 Van Helsing

HOT GAMES

Don't waste a second; turn on over to these big games NOW!



▲ Gran Turismo 4 pg. 66



▲ Nightmare Before Christmas pg. 70



▲ Siren pg. 73



GAME INFO

PUB UBISOFT | DEV UBISOFT SHANGHAI | TYPE FPS | REL DATE MARCH 2004 | MAX PLAYERS EIGHT | ESRB TEEN

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3



One of the biggest titles of 2003 is coming to a PS2 near you.

As one of the most popular titles on all of Xbox live, *Rainbow Six 3* turned out to be one of the key pieces of software for Sony's number one competitor late last year. With Microsoft's exclu-

sivity period now over, however, Ubisoft Shanghai is ready to bring a version to PlayStation 2 owners as well. And considering that this particular disc sports most of the same features as its Xbox counterpart, along with a slew of new bonus goodies, it may very well be THE FPS to own in 2004.

For veterans who played the game on Xbox, *Rainbow Six 3* should look familiar and new at the same time. Though it sports the same 14 stages and 30 weapons that are available in the

Microsoft version, it also contains an all-new 15th level set in Trieste that's been designed exclusively for the PlayStation 2. Four-on-four online play has been implemented as well (sorry, 56k users, it's broadband only) and for the first time in any version; the game also supports two-player split-screen cooperative play.

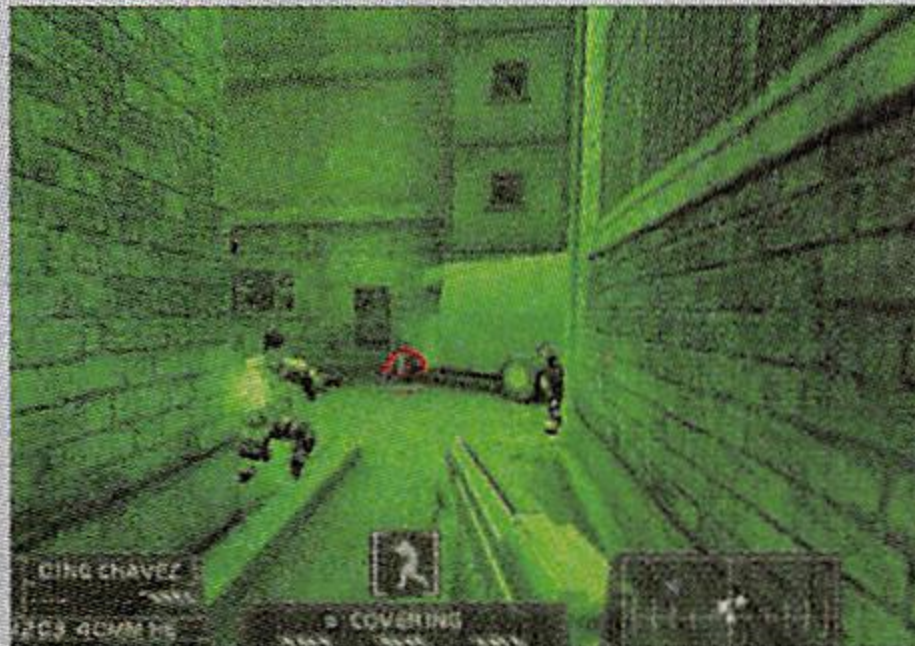
Because of the drastically different system specs between consoles, the PlayStation 2 iteration of *Rainbow Six 3* has also seen some significant changes in how its visuals and stages are designed. Rearranged so that familiar certain pathways and obstacles have been relocated or eliminated altogether, levels appear to be navigated at a much



<< RAINBOW SIX 3 SHOULD LOOK FAMILIAR AND NEW AT THE SAME TIME >>

Looking With Better Eyes...

While a sharp set of eyes can definitely help you out when you're in the field, you sometimes have to rely on good ol' technology in order to gain the advantage. In this game, using it properly could mean the difference between completing the mission and coming home in a box.



Thanks to some night vision and heat vision goggles, you should be able to get the leg-up on your opponents and, hopefully, get off the first and last shots.



The guns are modeled perfectly, as are the recoil and reloading animations. The developers seem to have left nothing to chance. Tom Clancy should be proud.



Not all areas in the game feature this many hiding places. Actually, you'll often have to get creative in where you and your men find cover.

Lights!... camera!... Action!

Utilizing the lighting engine from *Splinter Cell*, *Rainbow Six 3* is going to showcase some pretty cool-looking and highly realistic effects. The way that light reacts in the normal world is pretty much how it reacts in this game, so there won't be any real surprises when you're trying to sneak around in the shadows.



No details were left behind, as even the small light rays coming in through these broken blinds can be seen on the opposite wall.



Alcatraz is one of the better locations to check out the lighting effects, as there's always a good contrast between the light and shadows.

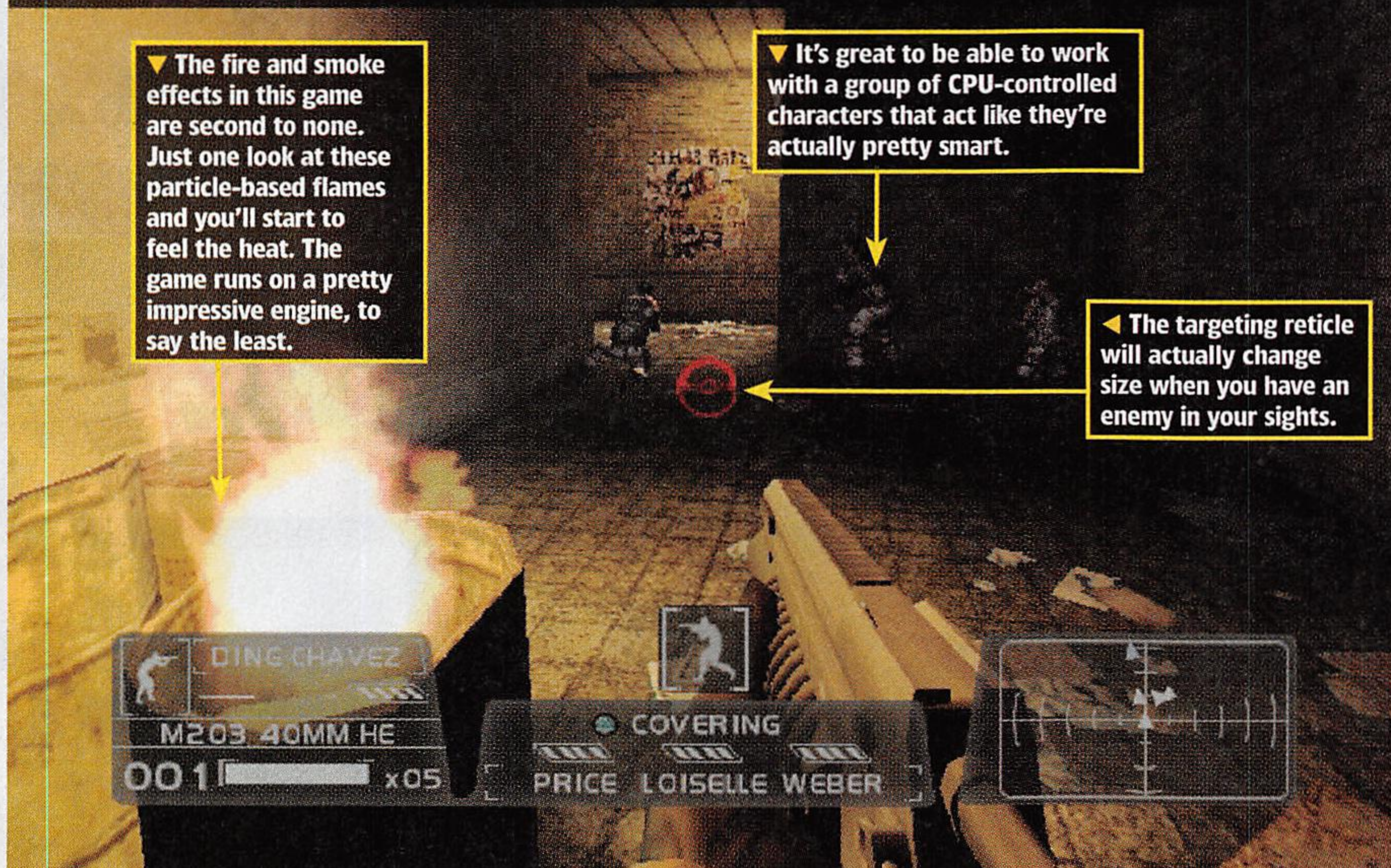
It's all fun and games until things start exploding. Then, it's just fun. The explosions in *R6* are just great to look at. It's great eye candy.

PSM BREAKDOWN An up-close look at the game in action

The fire and smoke effects in this game are second to none. Just one look at these particle-based flames and you'll start to feel the heat. The game runs on a pretty impressive engine, to say the least.

It's great to be able to work with a group of CPU-controlled characters that act like they're actually pretty smart.

The targeting reticle will actually change size when you have an enemy in your sights.



quicker pace and the framerate is locked in at around 30 per second.

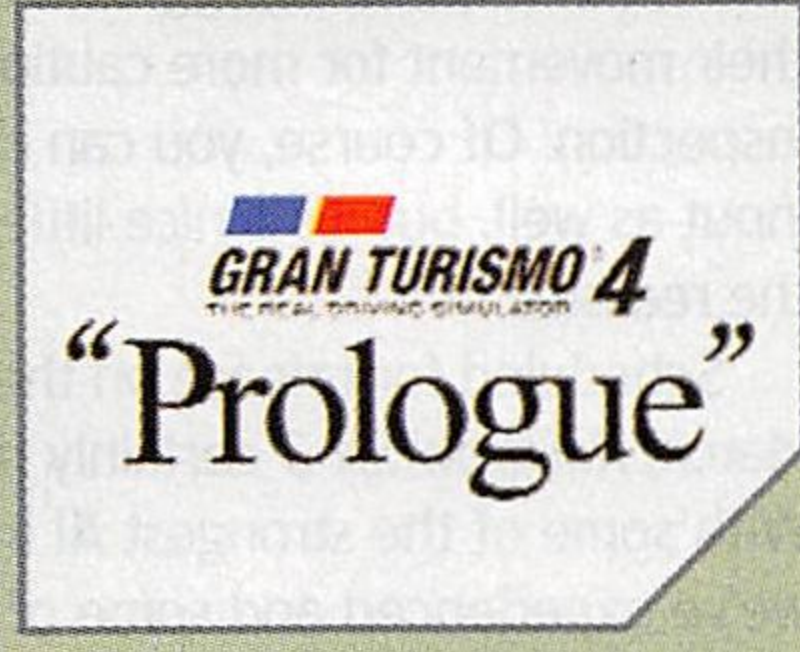
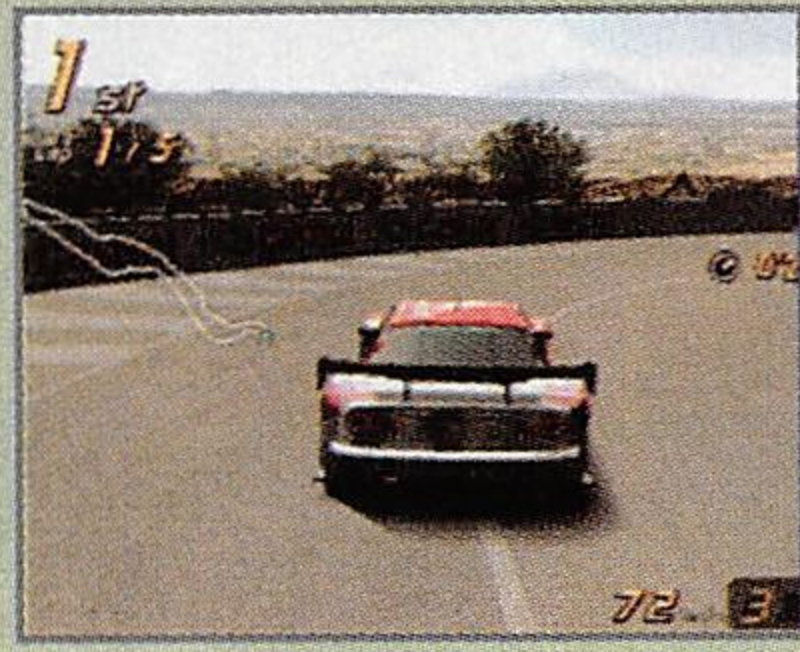
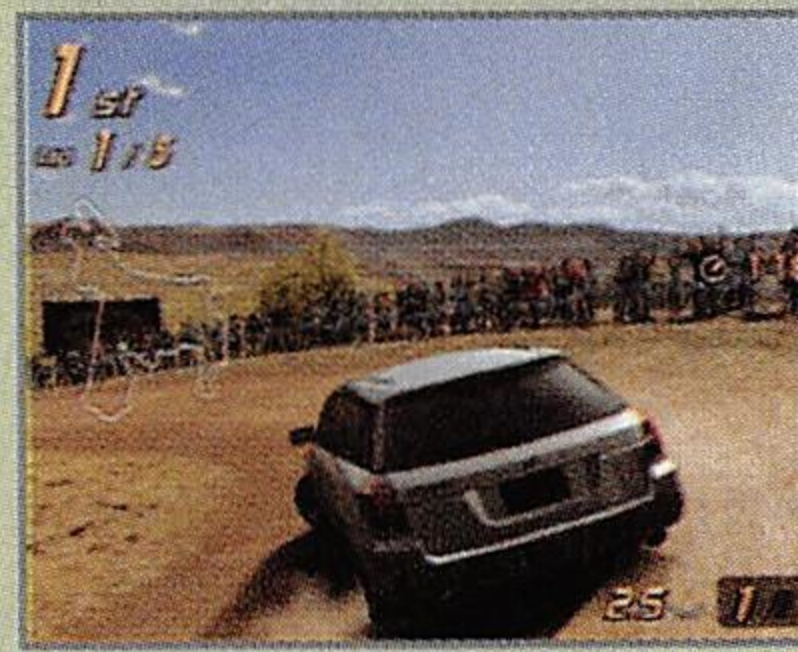
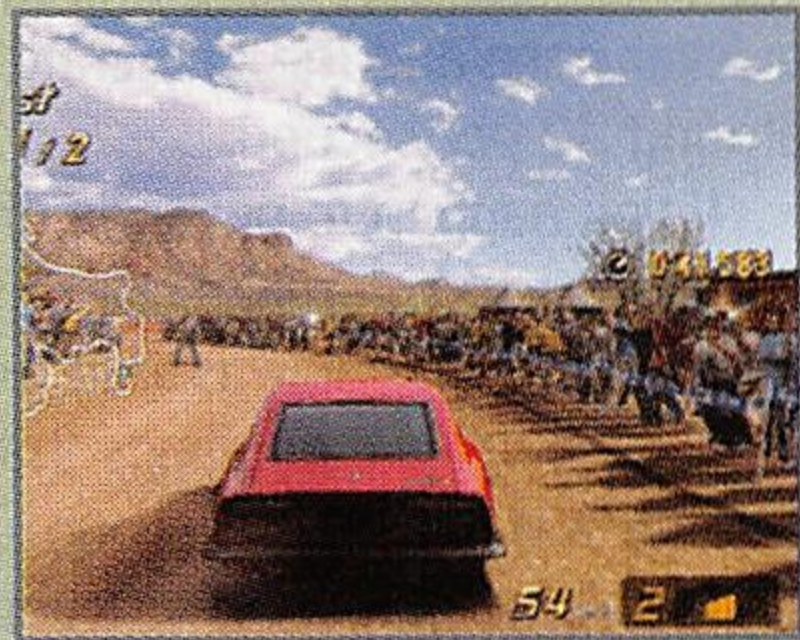
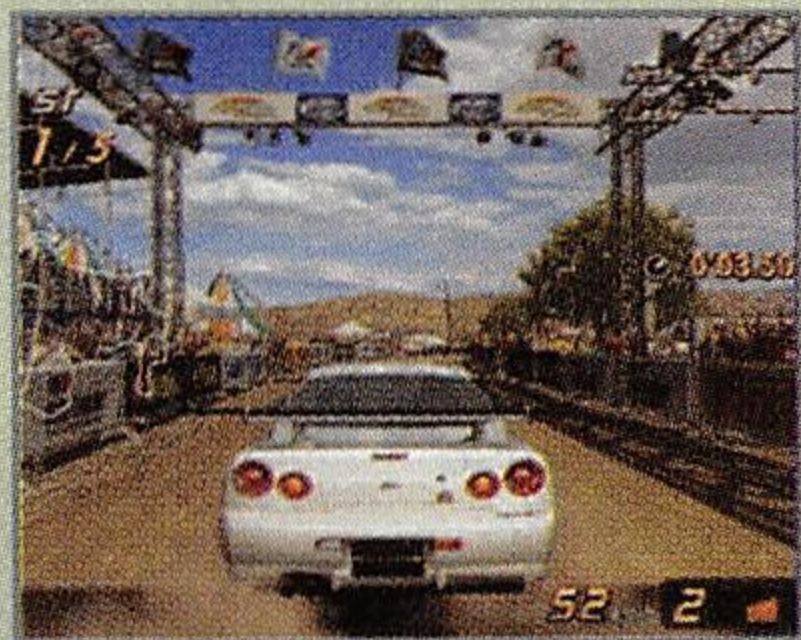
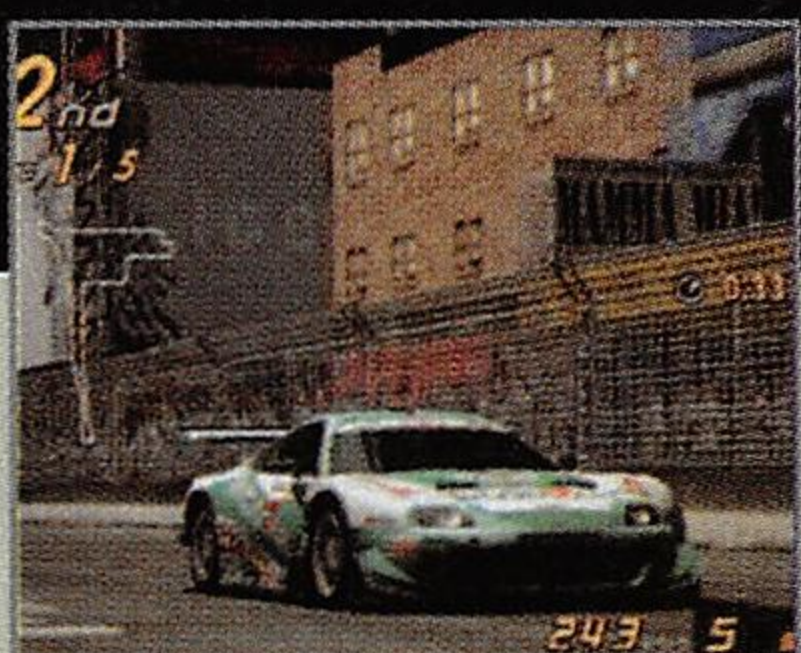
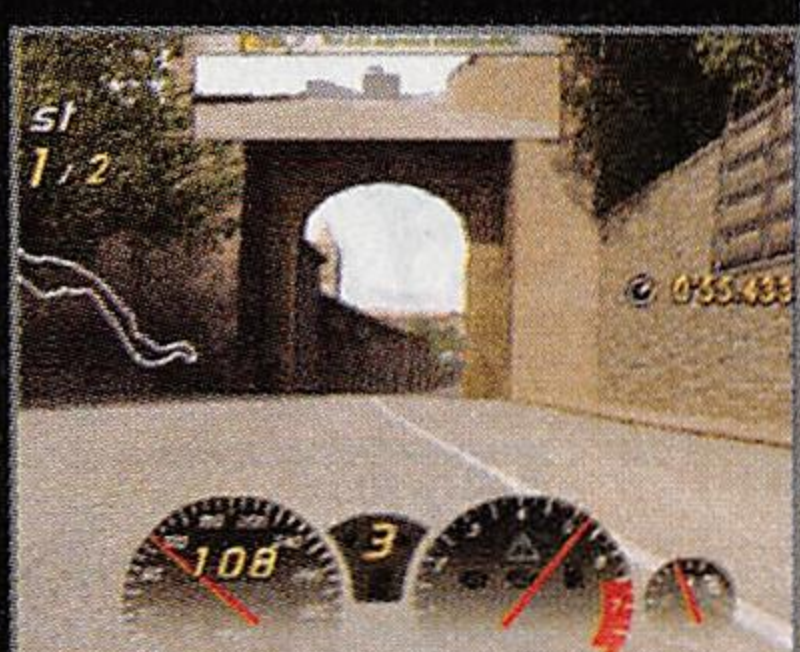
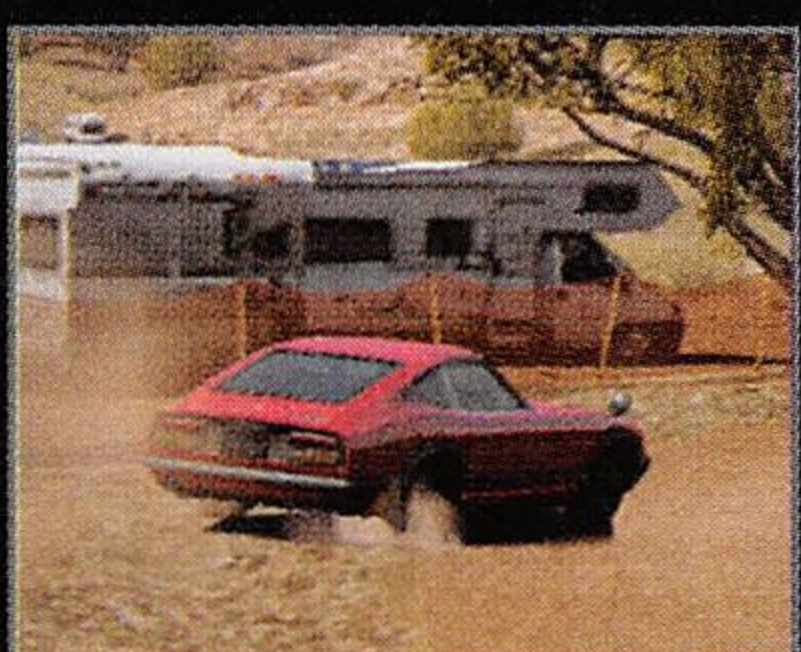
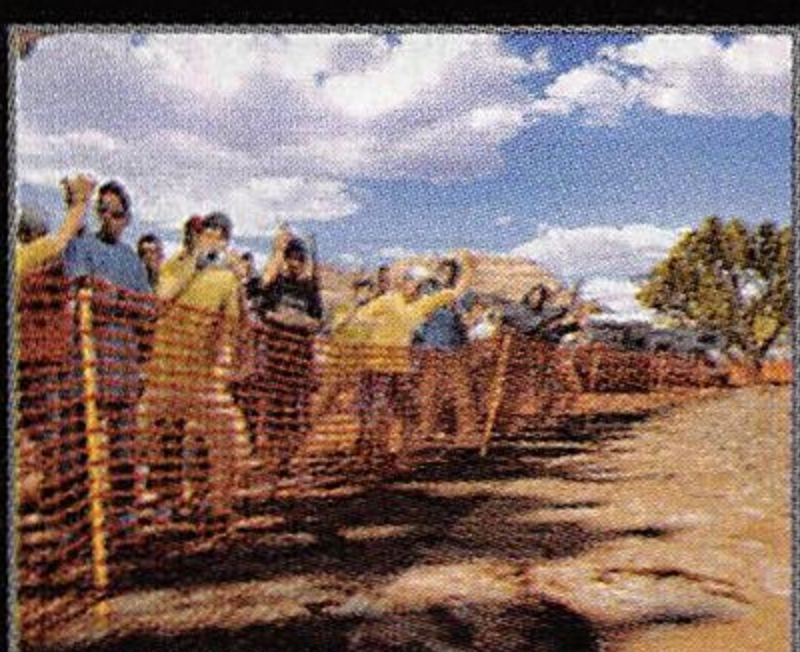
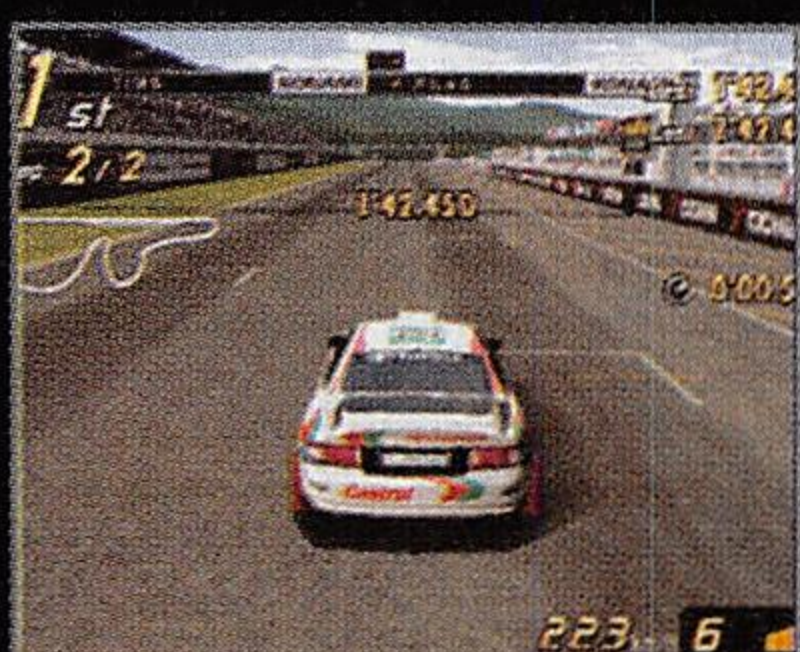
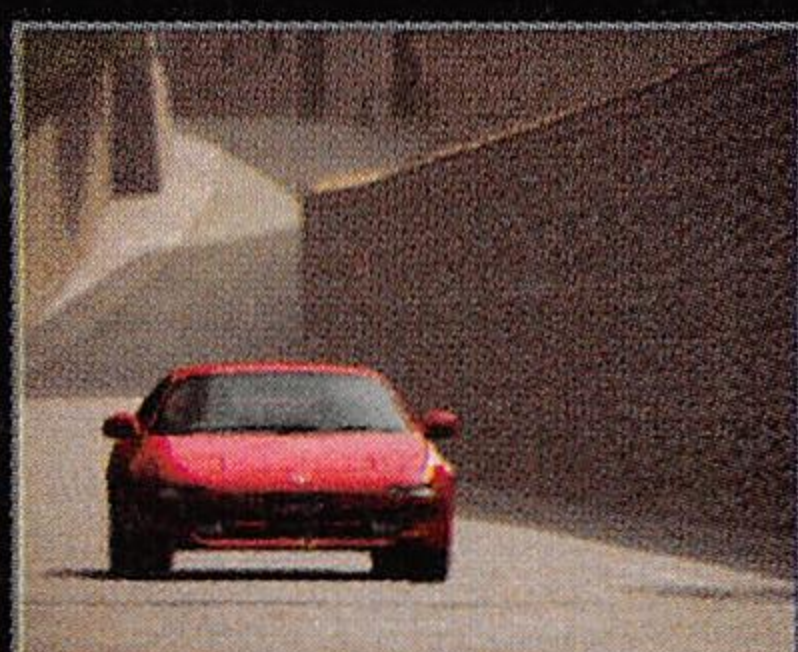
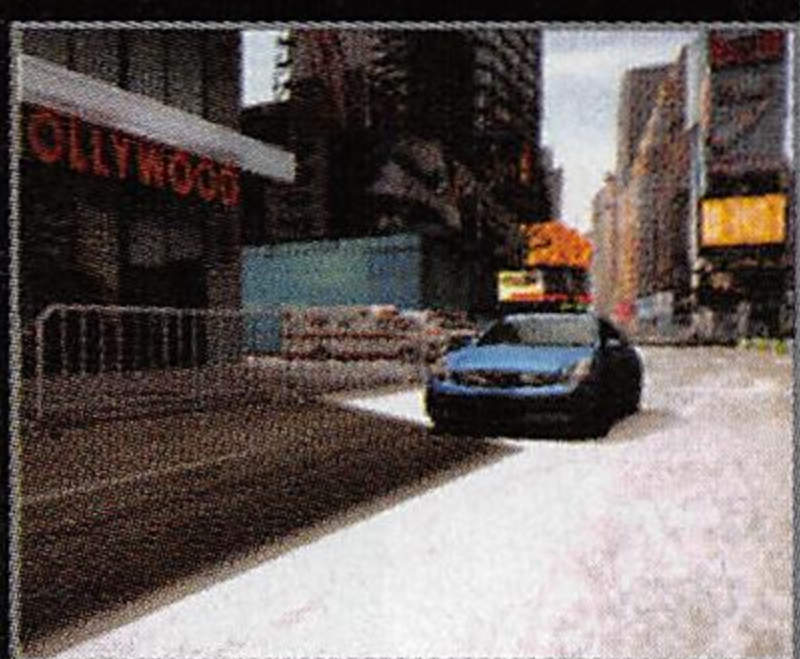
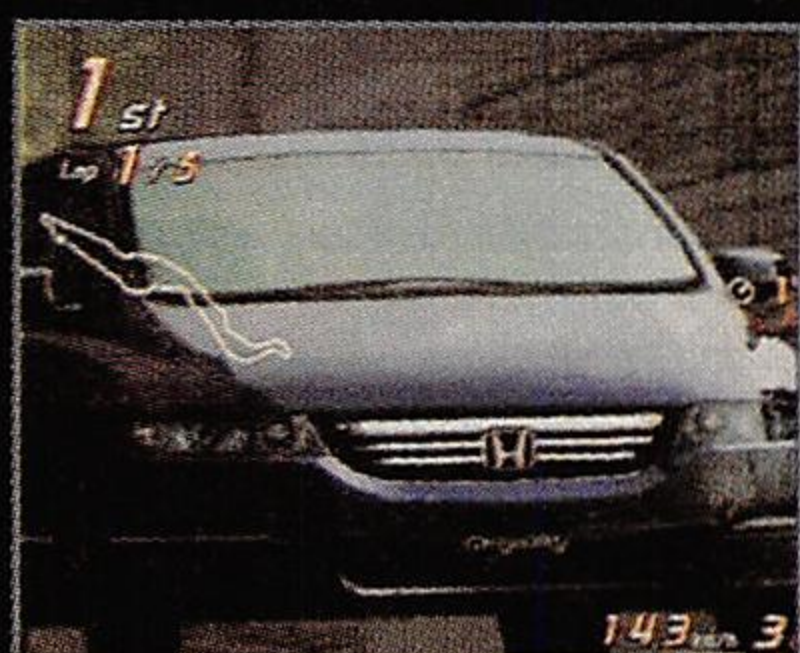
If you happen to own one of Sony's USB headsets, you can make use of that peripheral outside of online play as well. Employing a limited number of voice commands that can be used to give tactical directions to your teammates, the device allows players to instruct friendly AI to clear rooms, advance aggressively, or hold back their movement for more cautious environmental inspection. Of course, you can do this via controller input as well, but it's a nice little touch that adds to the realism.

Scheduled for release on the PlayStation 2 this March, *Rainbow Six 3* certainly has a lot of potential. With some of the strongest AI in a console FPS that we've experienced and some of the more techni-

cally impressive visuals we've seen on the PS2 for the genre so far, it's definitely one we'll keep our eyes on. Expect a big review on it soon.

JEREMY DUNHAM/STEPHEN FROST







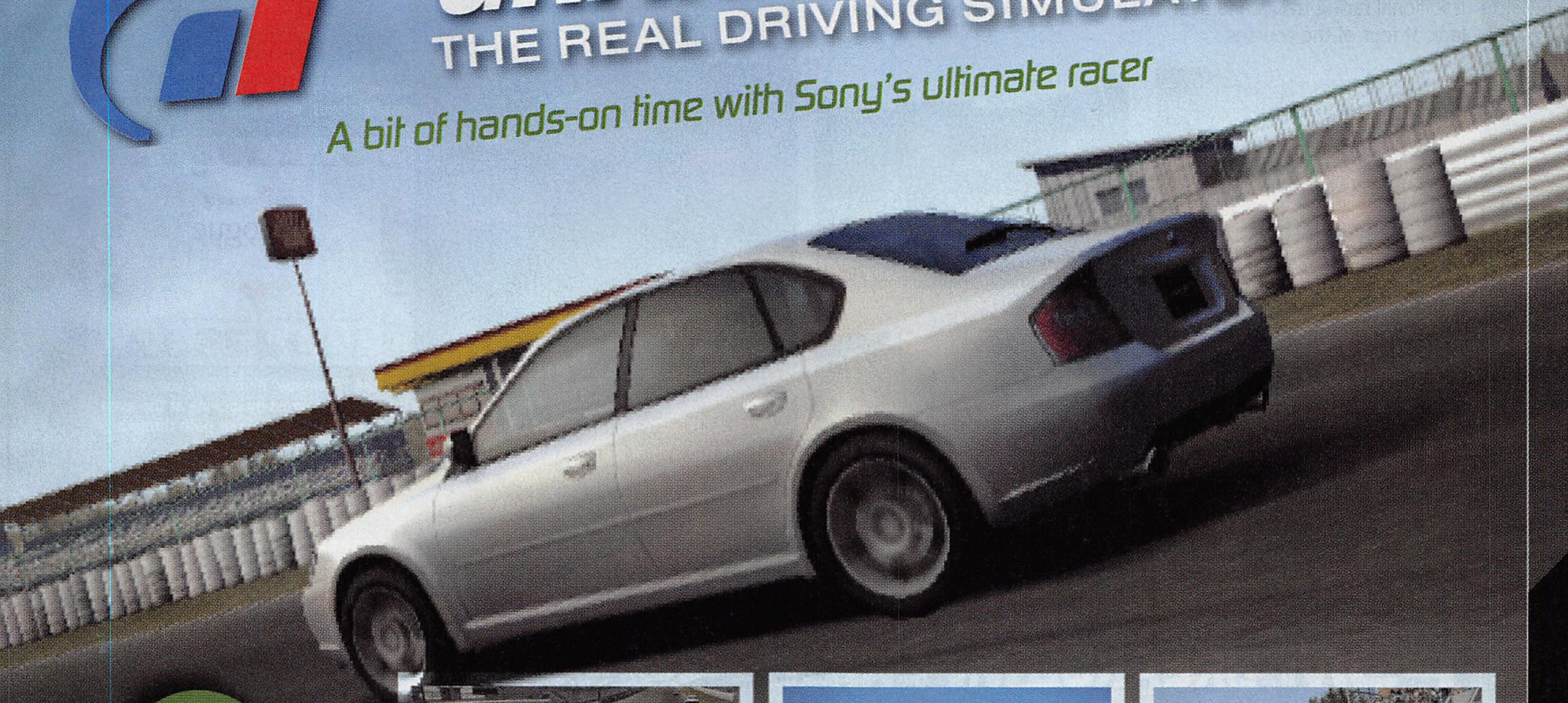
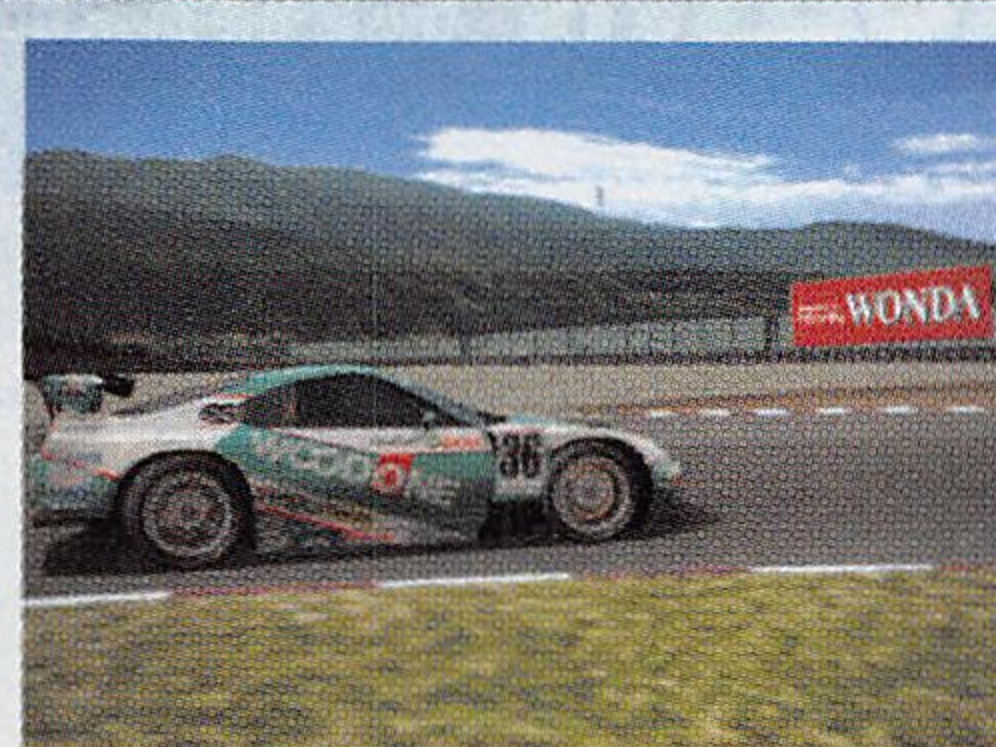
GAME INFO

PUB SONY CEA | DEV POLYPHONY DIGITAL | TYPE RACING | REL DATE 2004 | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB EVERYONE

GRAN TURISMO® 4

THE REAL DRIVING SIMULATOR

A bit of hands-on time with Sony's ultimate racer

ONLINE
COMPATIBLEONLY IN
PSM
NEW SCREENS

It's been a while since Sony let us get behind the virtual wheel of *GT4*, but that hasn't curbed our enthusiasm for the game one bit. In fact, our excitement has become even greater, due in no small part to the Japanese release of *Gran Turismo 4 "Prologue"*. Similar in many regards to *Gran Turismo Concept*, "*Prologue*" is basically a demo disc, featuring only 50 vehicles and 5 courses. Despite its brevity, though, the game does a good job of giving a glimpse of what we can all be expecting in the finished product.

Looking at "*Prologue*", some may argue that *GT4* is only a marginal improvement over *GT3*. However, there's definitely a lot going on under the hood, where all the detail and polish really are. Vehicles still won't ever see deformation modeling, but

we have a really hard time complaining about that when they look so good. Each of the 500+ vehicles in *GT4* has been painstakingly rebuilt in order to take full advantage of the revised renderer.

Course-work also gets that magic

touch with textures, lighting, particle effects, and level-of-detail all making a world of difference on the many racing venues. Italy, for instance, has such a great look and varying textures that you won't think the PS2 needs more texture memory. New York has tons of different buildings with the real billboards and signs, plus those same buildings have some great real and faked reflection mapping.

Sadly, the crowds viewing all the racing action are still currently 2D, but there's definitely been a lot of effort put into them, nonetheless. Photographers scurry off the tracks, as you near, and other bystanders jump and cheer as you race by. All in all, it definitely adds a lot to the game's atmosphere. Even better, there's a chance that these 2D crowds will be replaced with fully polygonal sideliners

in the final version of the game.

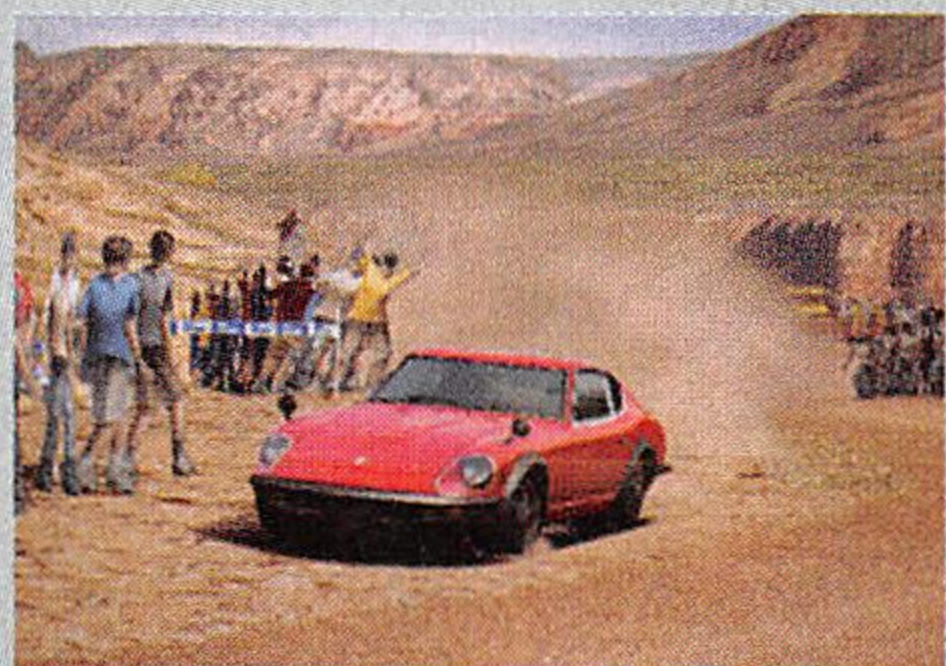
Without a doubt, Sony and Polyphony have taken that extra step to make sure that we're not playing just the same game with a few new cars and tracks. The physics engine is improved significantly and is most noticeable in the Grand Canyon rally course, where it really felt like the WRX was sliding on gravel. Somehow, Yamauchi-san's team has crammed the subtle nuances of vehicle dynamics in a shiny little DVD, which is impressive, to say the least. Gameplay with the Driving Force Pro is also improved and going back to Dual Shock is going to be a tough sell after tackling the tracks with the 900-degree Logitech wheel.

The only disappointing, if you can call it that, aspect of "*Prologue*" is that it only makes us want *GT4* even more.



Racing Around The World

Even in "Prologue", one can tell that the variety of courses in *GT4* is going to be quite large. You've got everything from rally to street to traditional racing tracks and everything else in-between. Here's a quick look at four of the courses.



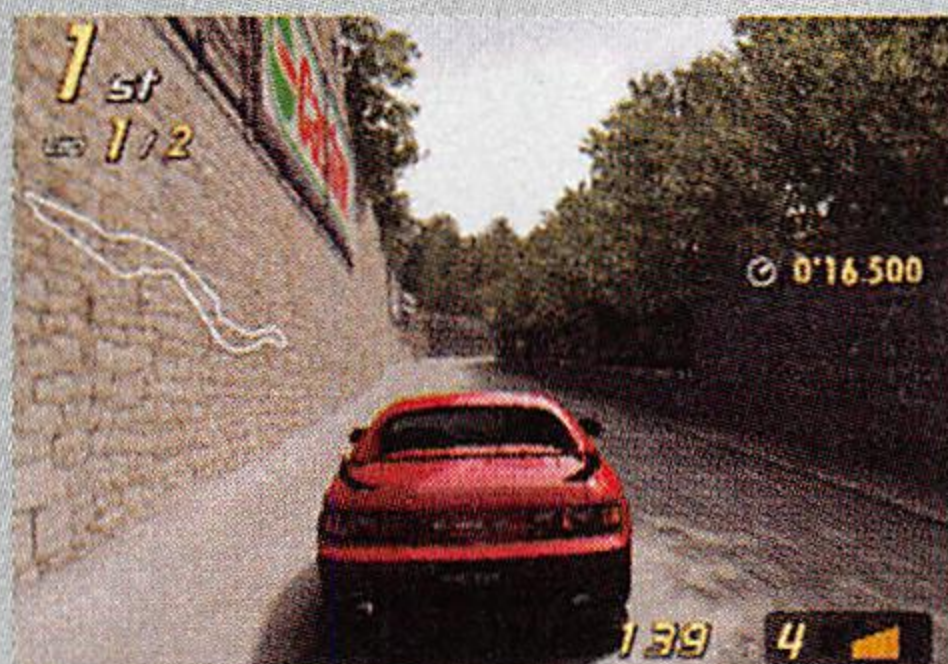
▲ Grand Canyon



▲ Tsukuba Circuit



▲ New York



▲ Citta di Aria



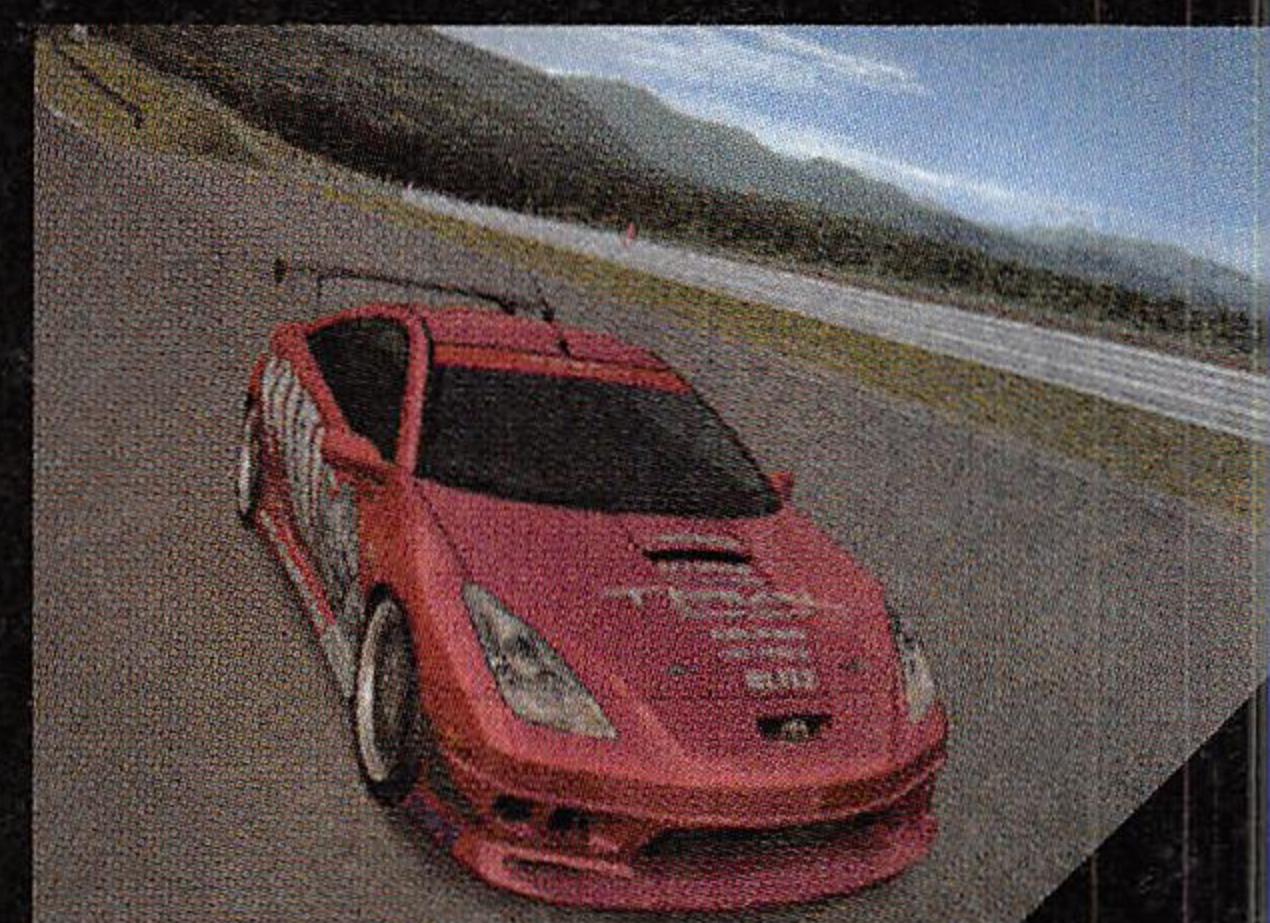
▲ It's actually pretty amazing how much detail can be found in the car models. You can even see the full exhaust system under this Lancia.



▲ There's a rumor that the final car count for this game could be well into the 700s. That's just crazy, but we're still hoping.

And, with Sony being so tightlipped about the actual game's release date, we can only wonder when we'll be able to get behind the wheel once again. Until that happens, these screens will just have to do.

TYRONE RODRIGUEZ/STEPHEN FROST



▲ We still have a tendency to use the cooler-looking, new race cars rather than the more nostalgic ones. We're just crazy that way.



▲ In the "Prologue" demo disc, you can check your progress by looking at the main menu screen. It tracks your path through the game.

THE BUZZ

Sony's racer is coming along nicely and our excitement level has gone even higher.

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



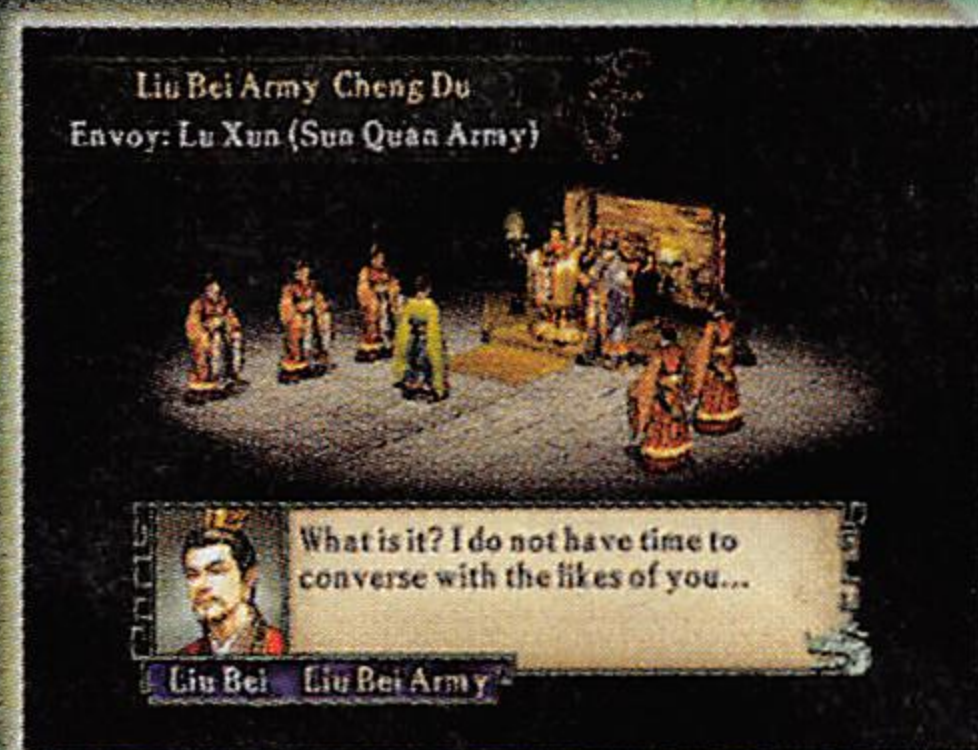
▲ It's amazing to see how much the developers were still able to get out of the PS2. These dust clouds look even better than the ones found in *GT3* and that's saying something. Everything is so realistic.

▲ It will be interesting to see how many cars actually make it into the final game. We originally thought there would only be around 300-400, but there might be as many as 700 different vehicles.

▼ There's a chance that the 2D bystanders will be replaced by motion-captured, polygonal models. Even if they aren't, the animations of these sprite-based characters are already quite impressive to see.

koei
www.koei.com

thanks!
25th
KOEI's 25th Anniversary



Play as a ruler and conquer the empire!



Uncover the secrets to total domination!



New Map! New Gameplay! New Kingdoms!

Romance of The Three Kingdoms IX

A Strategic Simulation Masterpiece February 2004

- 15 Historical, 5 Fictional, and 5 Challenge scenarios
- Build towers or set traps to hold back invasions
- Set troop formations to activate over 30 different tactics
- Use diplomacy while under attack, shift strategies in combat or ally with foreign tribes
- Officer personality affects responses to commands
- Use save data from Dynasty Warriors® 4, DW4XL or Dynasty Tactics™ 2 to obtain a new officer
- Soundtrack performed by the Moscow Symphony Orchestra
- 1-8 Players

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more ratings
information.

Romance of the Three Kingdoms, Dynasty Warriors, Xtreme Legends, Dynasty Tactics, and the KOEI logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of KOEI Co., Ltd. ©2003-2004 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

3DCGデザイナー募集中!!

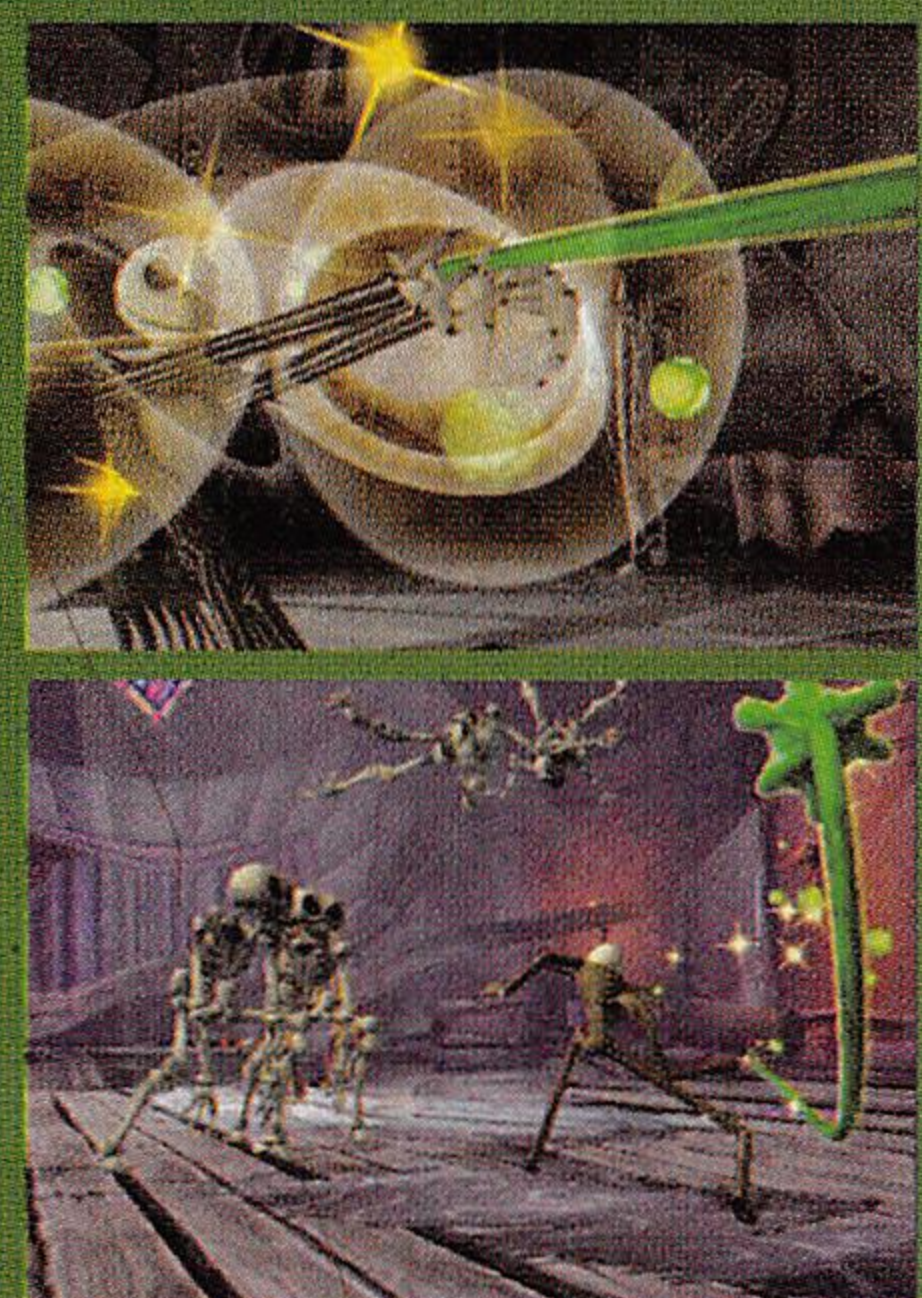
勤務地: カナダまたは日本 応募方法など詳細は
www.koei.co.jp/html/joboffer をご覧ください。

PlayStation®2



Whip It Good

The "rubber soul" is one of the most unique weapons in recent memory. It can lash out at enemies like a gooey whip, or grab them and slam 'em into each other.



▲ Remember those gooey "sticky hand" toys that you could flick at people? Someone at Capcom obviously did...



◀ Jack doesn't attack directly... he uses his "rubber soul" for some Castlevania-style whipping action.

THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Tim Burton's spooky animated movie becomes... an action game?

It may have been released 11 years ago, but Disney's animated musical, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, has been resurrected, so to say, within the past year. You can't walk into a mall without seeing shops selling *TNBC* merchandise, and, come later this year, your local game shop will be stocking the first full videogame based on the film.

Gamers first got an interactive taste of the movie in Square Enix's *Kingdom Hearts*, but this game,

developed by Capcom, is far more ambitious. So ambitious, in fact, that it's being billed as a sequel to the Halloween-themed film. That said, all of the movie's main characters are returning, including the evil Oogie Boogie, who'll serve as the game's main bad guy. Yes, he "died" at the end of the movie, but Capcom's evidently dreamt up some inventive (but still hush-hush) way to bring him back.

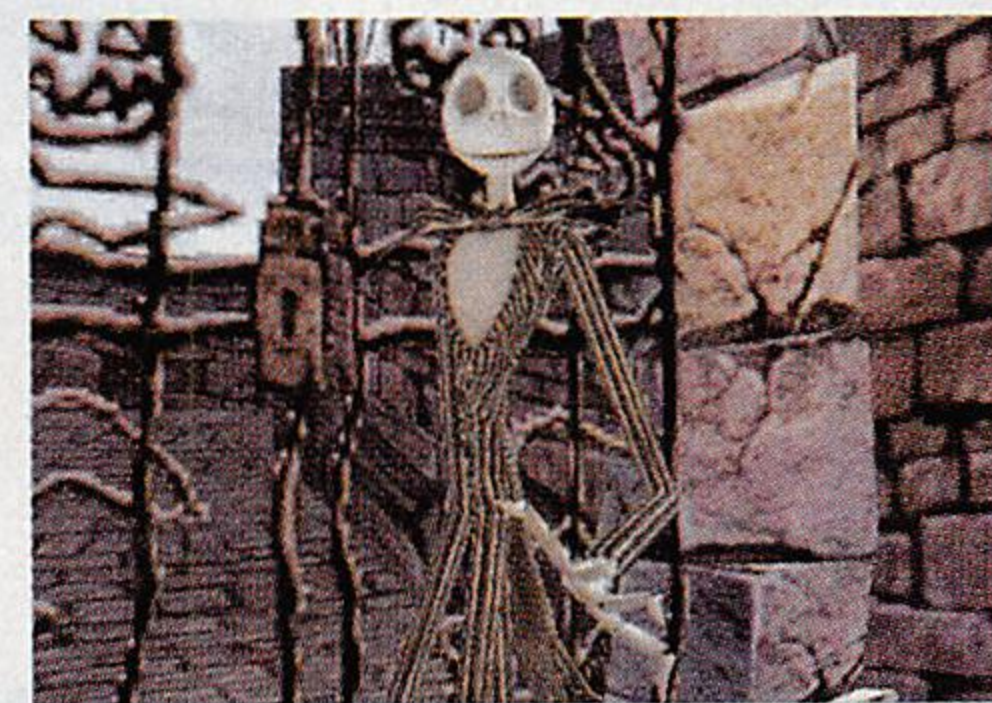
The most important

character, of course, will be the king of Halloween himself, Jack Skellington. The master of fright won't use scare tactics against his enemies — skeletons and other ghastly foes sent by the Boogie man — but rather a "rubber soul." This gooey green blob can whip out from Jack's hand, grabbing enemies and then smashing them into the environment or each other. The tentacle's tip can also morph into a sharp point for stabbing enemies outright.

With the movie's visual designer on board, the game is already looking incredibly like the 1993 stop-motion feature, right down to the character's stylized lip movements.

There's no word yet whether the game will feature any music by songsmith Danny Elfman, but we'll keep you posted. **RANDY NELSON**

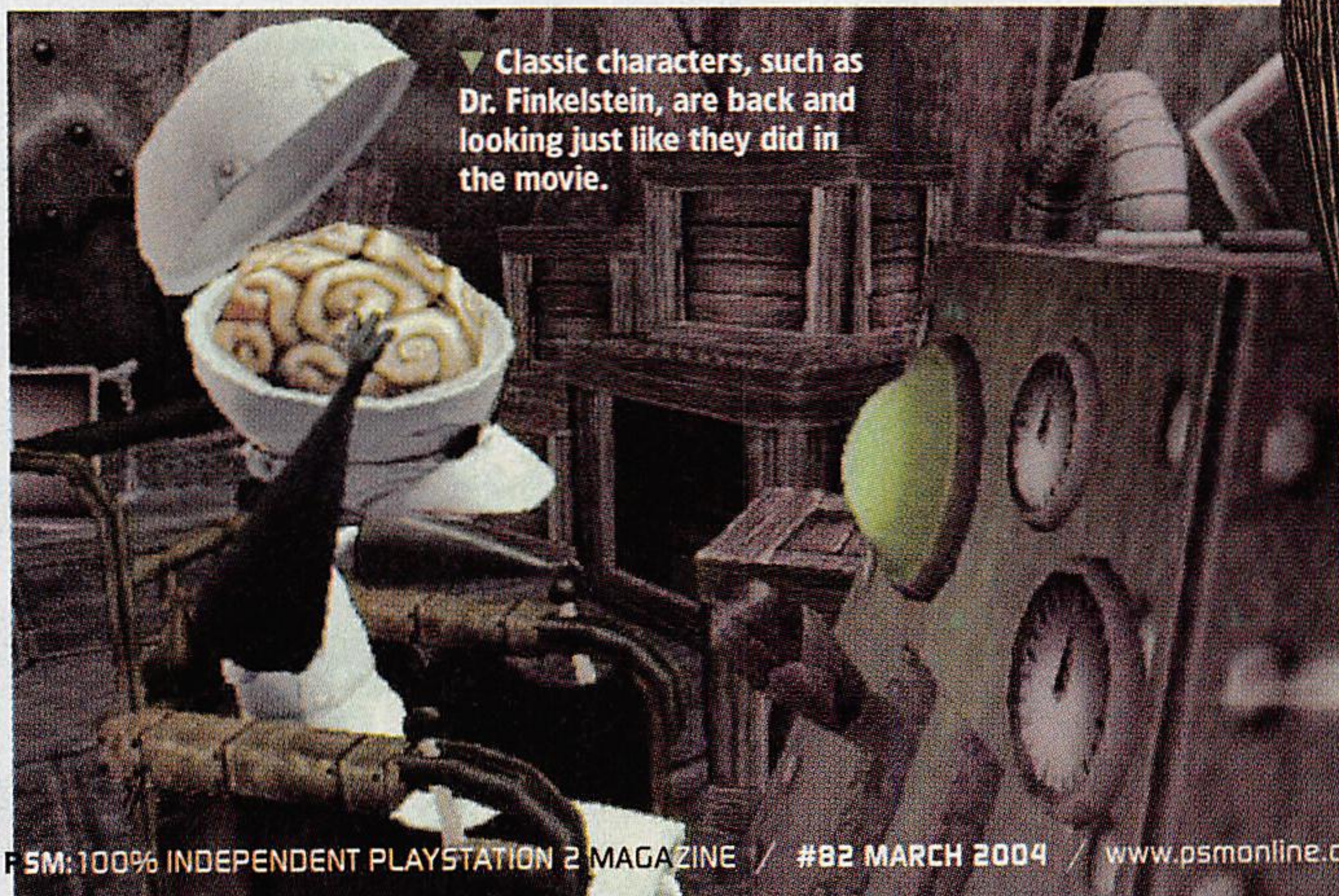
◀ Jack Skellington, a.k.a. the Pumpkin King, is one skinny guy — but that doesn't mean he can't be an action hero.



▲ The game's visual style is being supervised by the same person who designed the movie's look.



▲ You'll see familiar sights, such as the Halloween town fountain, but also entirely new areas designed just for the game.



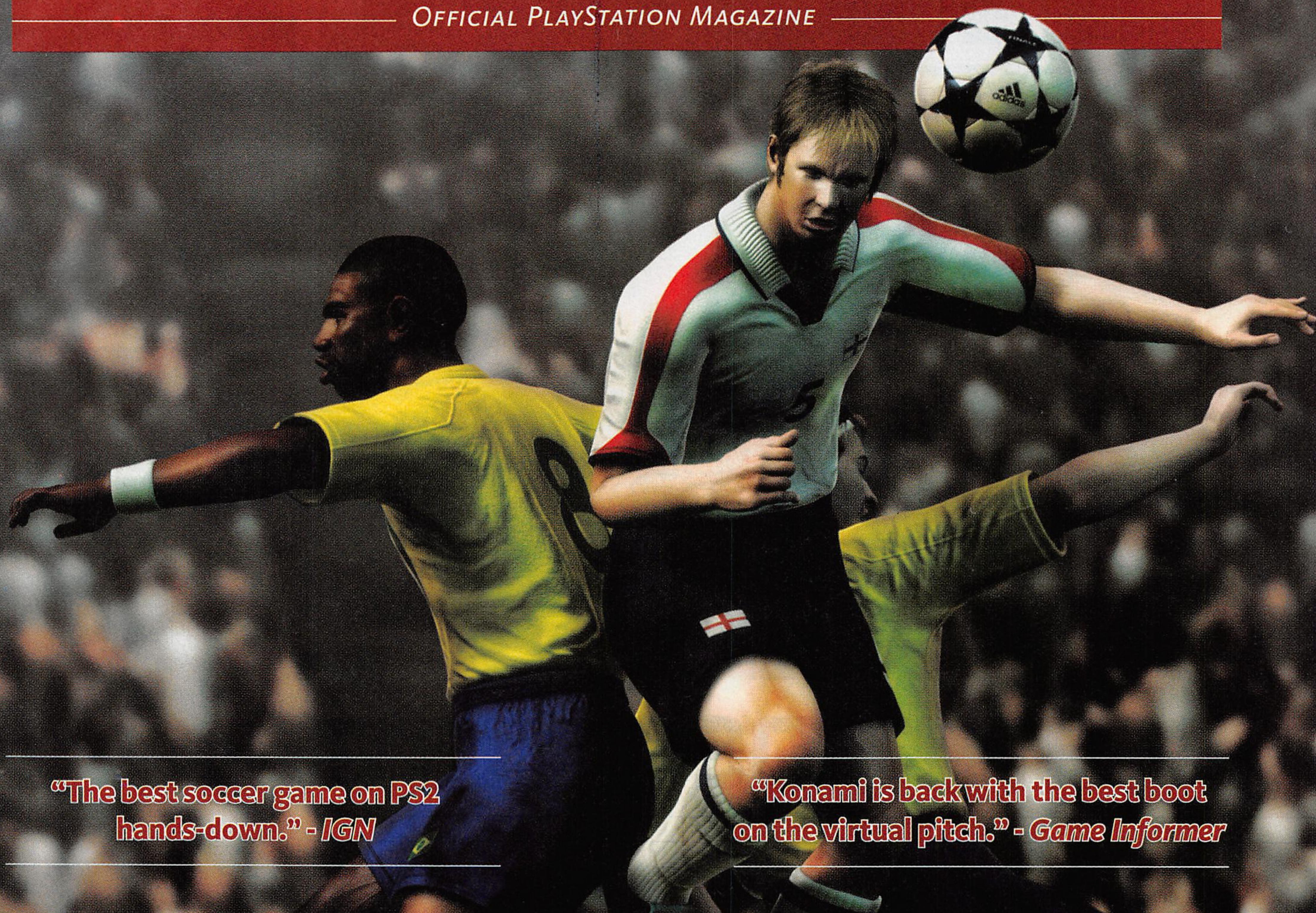
▼ Classic characters, such as Dr. Finkelstein, are back and looking just like they did in the movie.

THE BUZZ

Never pegged as an action title, Capcom's work with the concept is impressive.

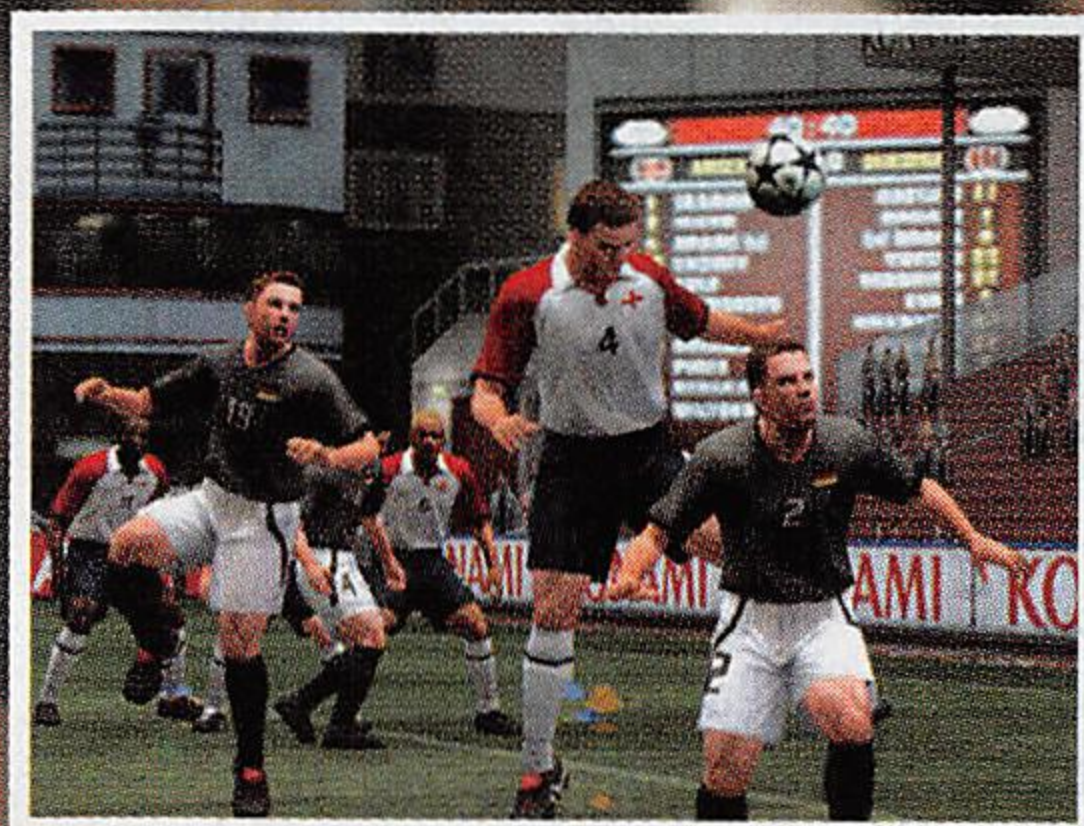
"THE BEST SOCCER GAME EVER MADE."

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

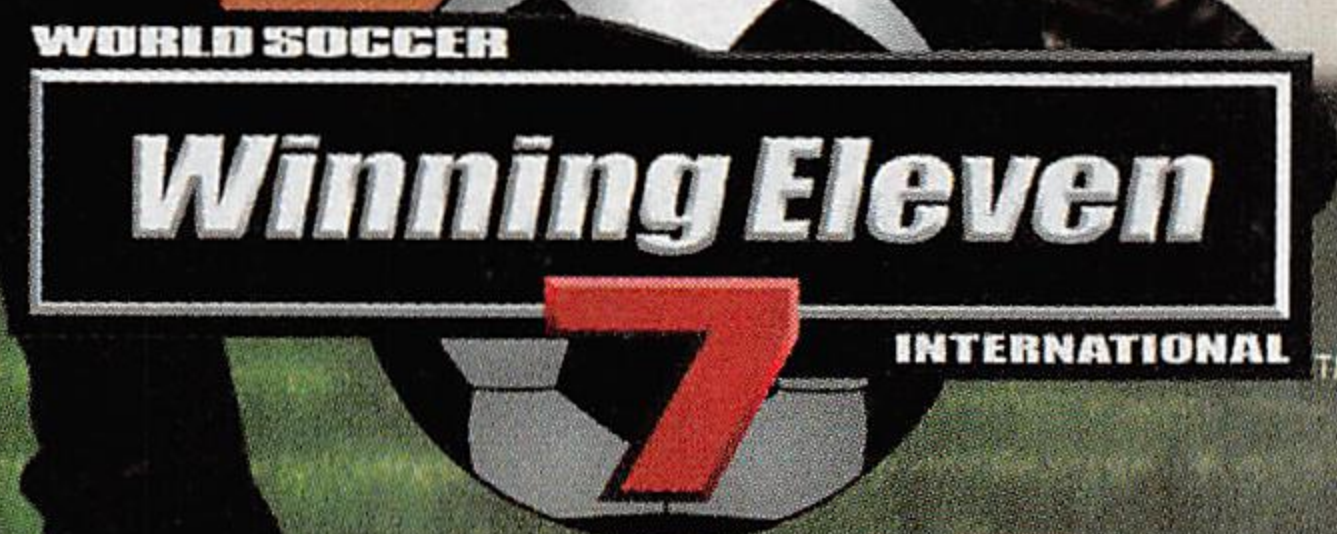


"The best soccer game on PS2 hands-down." - IGN

"Konami is back with the best boot on the virtual pitch." - Game Informer



**MORE TEAMS. MORE STADIUMS. MORE STRATEGIC OPTIONS.
AND THE MOST REALISTIC GAME ENGINE EVER. WINNING ELEVEN 7.
THE BEST GAME IN THE WORLD ABOUT THE BEST GAME IN THE WORLD.**



PlayStation 2



©1996 JAPAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION ©2002 JFA MAX

©2004 KONAMI & Konami Computer Entertainment Tokyo. "KONAMI" is a registered trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. "World Soccer Winning Eleven 7 International" is a trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. adidas, the adidas logo and the 3-Stripe trade mark are registered trade marks of the adidas-Salomon group, used with permission. The use of real player names and likenesses is authorised by FIFA and its member associations. ©2001 KFA. Officially Licensed by Korea Football Association. Special thanks to Fortuna, MUKTA, SEJIN, Denis for Korea National Team data. Milan's trademarks, name and logo appear under license from Milan A.C. S.p.A. Official product manufactured and distributed by KONAMI under licence granted by Roma International Football Service S.r.l. Produced under the license from Lazio Societa Sportiva S.p.A. Parma and Parma Logo are trademarks of Parma Associazione Calcio S.p.A. Official Juventus Product. JUVENTUS and the JUVENTUS logo are registered trademarks owned by Juventus F.C. S.p.A. © 1993/all rights reserved Stichting Feyenoord, Rotterdam. Licensed by: Stichting Feyenoord, Rotterdam. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

GAME INFO | PUB SEGA | DEV SEGA WOW | TYPE ACTION | REL DATE FEBRUARY | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB MATURE



▼ Right from the beginning, *Nightshade's* levels are more exciting than *Shinobi's*. Here Hibana battles atop a flying plane.



▲ "Maybe if I stand here long enough, they'll get bored and leave."

Hotsuma's Back!



▲▼ Hotsuma's back in action, but as a hidden character and not the leading man this time around.

NIGHTSHADE *HANDS-ON with Sega's sexy Shinobi sequel!*

Last year's *Shinobi* had a great lead character, but its game world didn't have a lot of, well, character. Enter the game's follow-up: *Nightshade*. Developed by the same team, now known as Sega Wow, it introduces a sexy new heroine that controls a lot like Hotsuma and tosses

▼ Play well enough, and you'll unlock a scandalous alternate costume for Hibana.



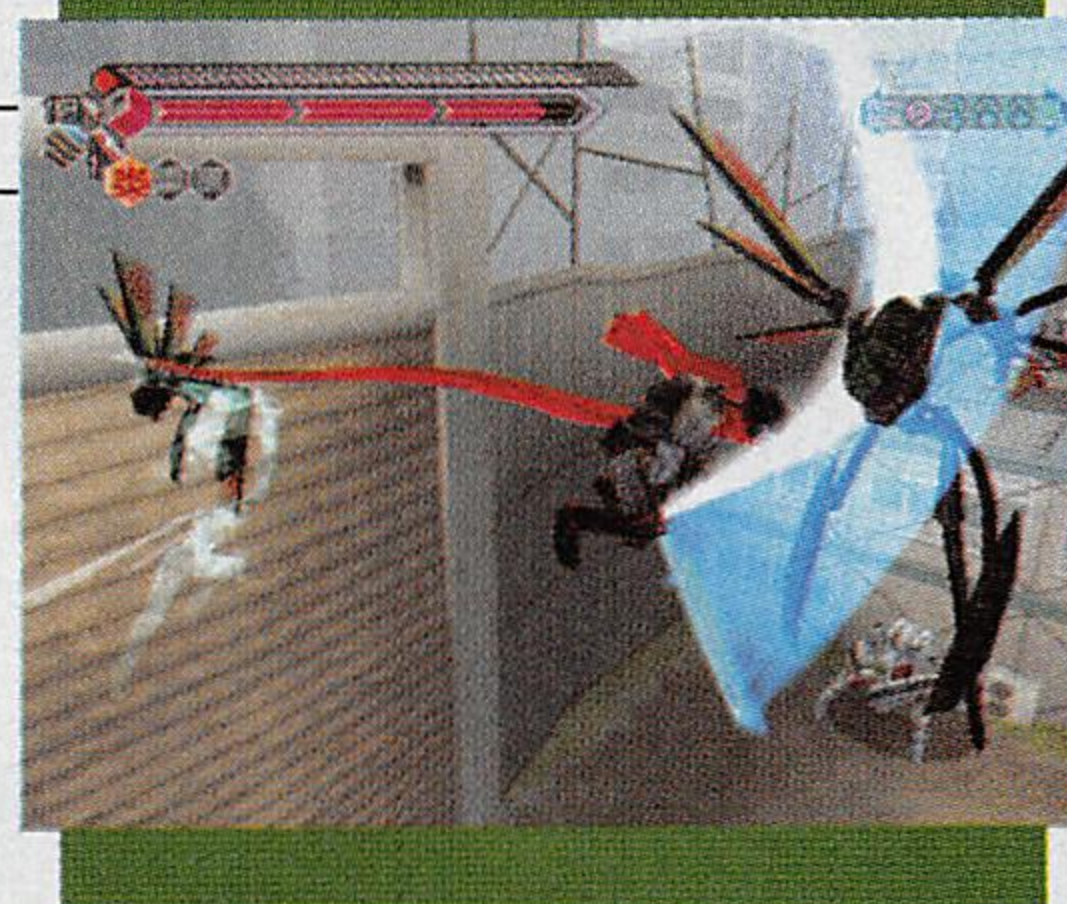
her into levels that, so far, are far more interesting than *Shinobi's*.

Just like *Shinobi's* Hotsuma, *Nightshade's* kunoichi ("female ninja") Hibana has a variety of attacks and acrobatic moves at her disposal — such as throwing knives, swords, and the ability to run along / hang from walls. She can also execute the same "shadow dash" move to complete long jumps and quickly chain together attacks to perform

multi-kill "Tates" (tah-tays) against enemies that power up her blade. Hibana can also use several forms of ninja magic, and additional weapons, such as nunchaku.

The clear evolution in *Nightshade*, however, comes in the form of overall variety. Right from the start, you're fighting enemies on top of a stealth bomber. Later on, you have to jump between moving big rigs as they barrel down the highway. Even running along rooftops has been made more interesting from a level design standpoint. In short, there's a lot more to like about the game's levels and enemies.

Other than that, the gameplay is very similar to *Shinobi's* thus far. In fact, you can unlock Hotsuma as a bonus character and play as him



in the same levels Hibana has gone through. In a bit of a wacky twist, Sega Wow has also created an alternate costume for Hibana that has her in hotpants and cowboy boots. Yow!

Look for our full review of *Nightshade* next issue! RANDY NELSON

THE BUZZ
With improved levels and refined gameplay, *Nightshade* may right *Shinobi's* wrongs.



▲ *Nightshade* definitely has a more high-tech, or futuristic feel than *Shinobi*.



GAME INFO | PUB SONY CEA | DEV SONY CEI | TYPE HORROR | REL DATE MARCH | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB MATURE



▲ The monsters, or *Shibito* are actually the town's residents turned into ghastly undead fiends.

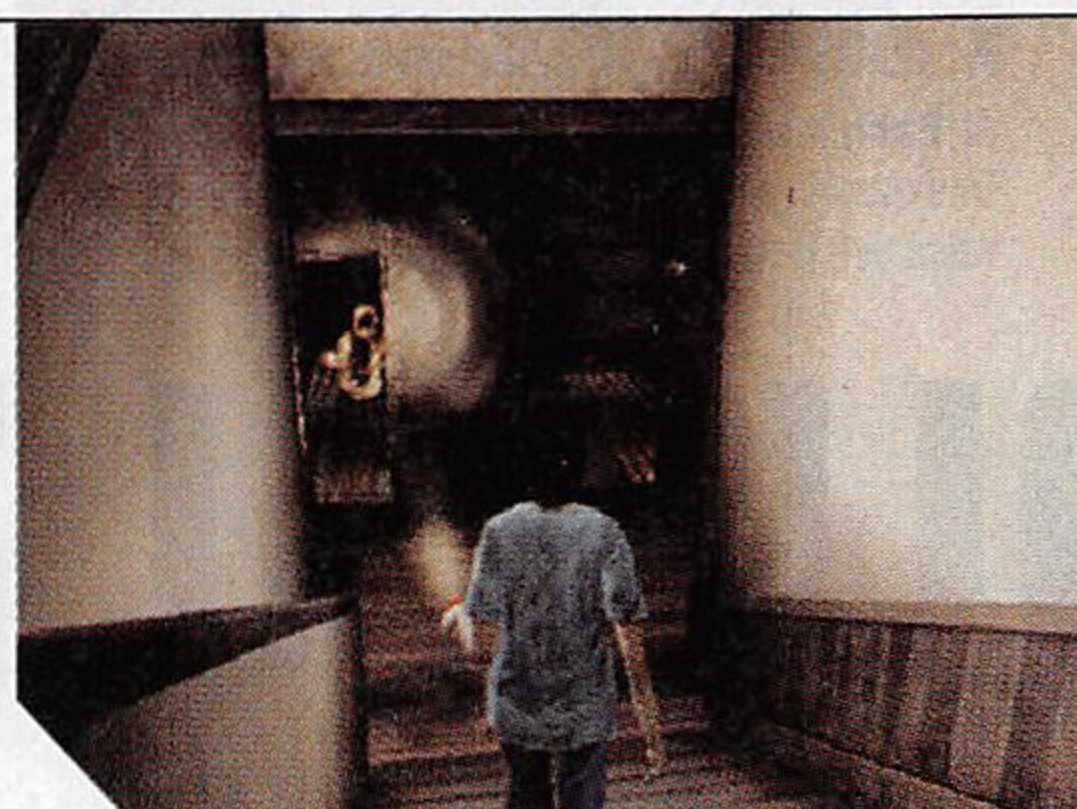
SIREN

Sony scares up its own breed of horror

Horror games are big. Titles like *Silent Hill*, *Fatal Frame*, and, to a lesser extent, *Resident Evil*, have been scaring us silly for years — and selling like mad in the process. Sony isn't blind to the fact, so it's hoping to get its own piece of the action — and bring something new to the genre in the process — with *Siren*.

Developed in-house at Sony's Japanese studios, the game is set in a dark, fog-shrouded town. Sound familiar? Thankfully, that's where any similarity to *Silent Hill* ends. The town in question is in a remote area of Japan, and things aren't exactly rosy. Well, things are red — the rain and water, to be specific. Add to that a mysterious, super-erie siren (hence the title) that calls the townsfolk to congregate and the fact that said townsfolk are turning into monsters, and you have one chiller of a setup.

So we've got a compelling story, but what about the gameplay? It's not your typical horror game fare, that's for sure. Rather than control one, two, or even three characters, you'll fill the shoes of 10 different people during the course of the game, which spans three days and 78 missions. Some character's missions actually



▲ Some characters have flashlights, but using them can alert *Shibito* to your presence.

take place before or after others' chronologically, so the puzzle of what's happened to the town is slowly pieced together.

By far the most unique aspect of *Siren* is its "sight-jacking" play mechanic. Using the analog stick, characters are able to "tune in" to different monsters' points of view, and assign them to face buttons on the controller. By switching between them, you get an idea of where the enemies are, and whether they can see you. Few things are scarier in a game that sight-jacking a monster, only to see that it's right behind you!

The audio effects and limited view distance only heighten the tension, making for a game that's *really* scary. Expect more on this one next month!

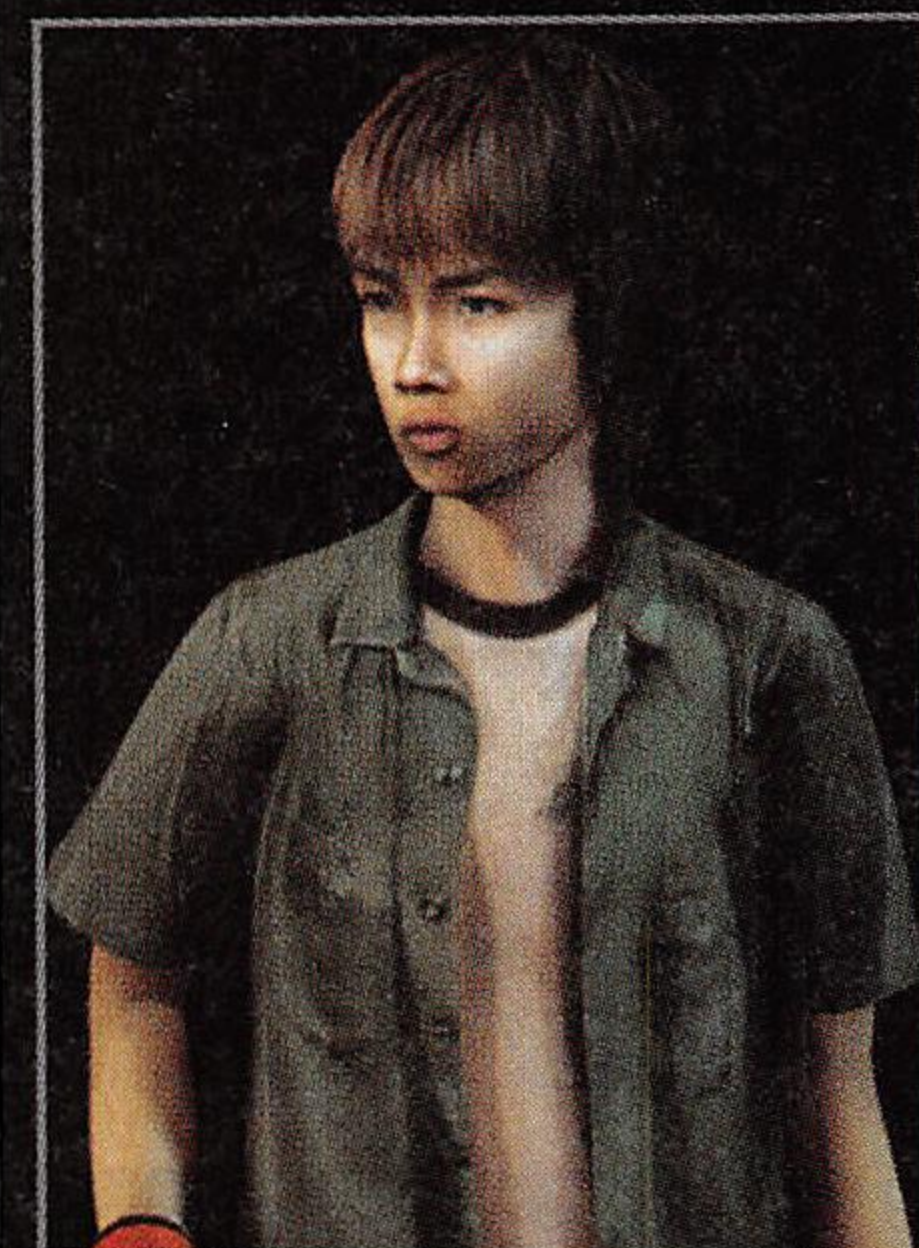
RANDY NELSON



▲ You'll be required to lead other characters through some of the game's missions. If they die, it's game over.

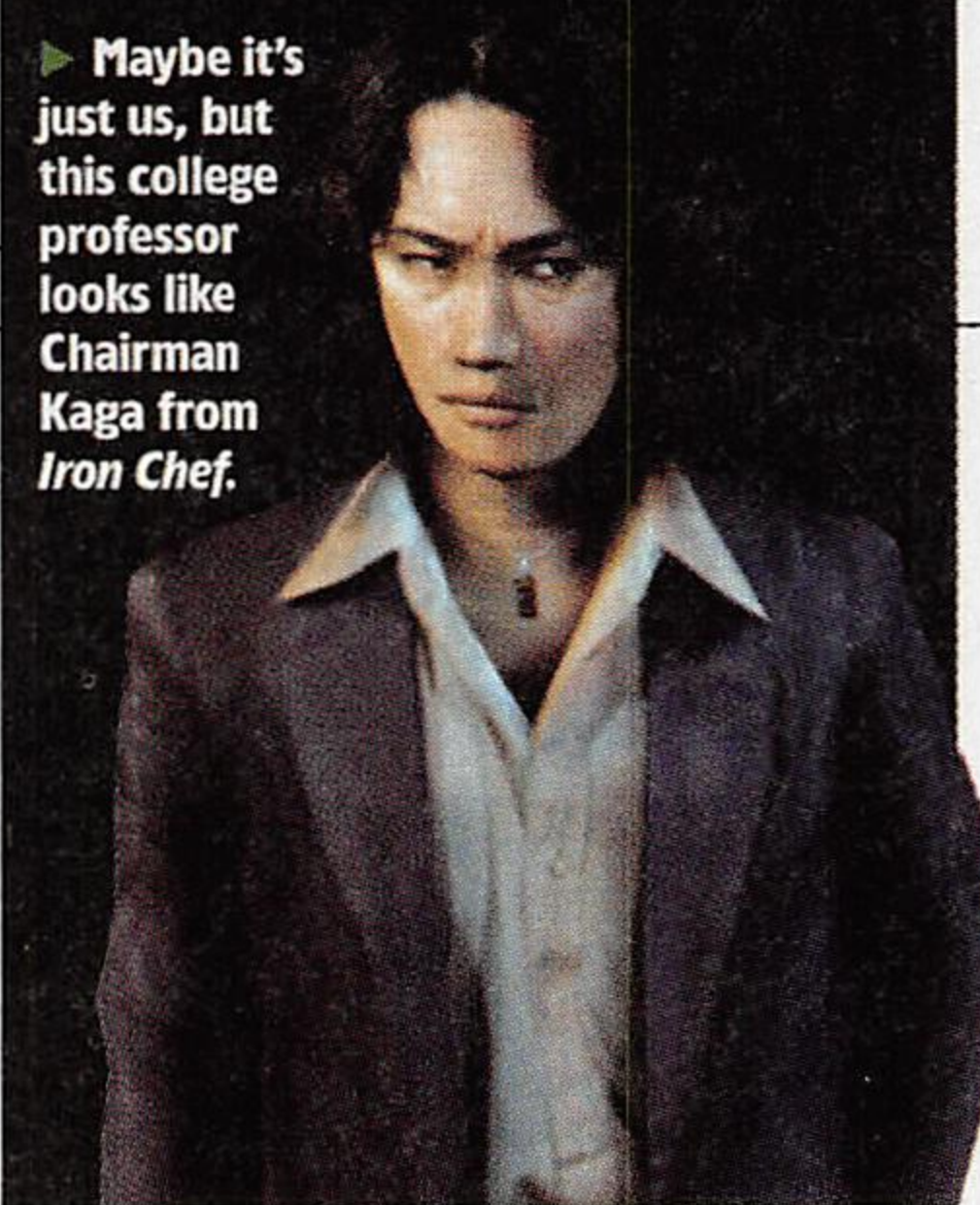
Faces Of Death

Siren's development team wanted to achieve a high level of realism, so it not only toured a genuinely spooky Japanese village, but also used real actors for all of the characters.



▲ This is the first character you play as: a very scared young boy named Kyo.

► Maybe it's just us, but this college professor looks like Chairman Kaga from *Iron Chef*.



THE BUZZ

This game is so scary, ads for it had to be pulled from TV in Japan!



◀ *Siren* plays off the emotional fear of having those close to you, even you family, suddenly go ghoul on you.

GAME INFO | PUB SAMMY | DEV DIMPS | TYPE ACTION | REL DATE SPRING | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB PENDING



When the meter at the bottom left of the screen fills up, you can pull out two swords and be able to use them as the same time. The additional damage you can cause is quite impressive.

A Legendary Cast

Like the classic movie, *Seven Samurai* 20XX will showcase a large number of well-designed and deep characters. You'll be interacting with them a lot, as the storyline unfolds through many different viewpoints.



▲▼ With Naoe at the lead, the other characters band together to do what's right. They may be a bit rough around the edges, but they definitely know how to handle themselves in a fight.



THE BUZZ

If the controls can be tweaked a little more, then action fans may find a lot here to see.



▲ It wouldn't be a very good action game if there weren't some truly spectacular boss fights. The true challenge comes in finding your enemy's weaknesses and then exploiting them with your blade. However, the best solution may not always be the most obvious.



▲ Each successful and continuous hit increases your combo meter, so try not to miss with any of your swings.

SEVEN SAMURAI 20XX

We cut into Sammy's action title to see what's underneath

Roughly half a century ago, legendary filmmaker Akira Kurosawa pioneered the modern action movie with his epic film, *Seven Samurai*. It told the story of a helpless village and its fight to defend itself — by hiring samurai — from a group of bandits. While the premise doesn't sound that remarkable on paper, the film's execution was flawless.

Obviously, making a game based on the property brings heavy expectations. It's no wonder, then, that Sammy Studios enlisted a group of high-profile names to contribute to the project. With Jean "Moebius" Giraud doing character designs, Ryuichi Sakamoto composing the

score, and Hisao Kurosawa — the late filmmaker's son — ensuring that the game is in spirit with the film, we have high hopes for *Seven Samurai* 20XX.

The game is essentially a retelling of the classic story, though it's set 500 or so years in the future. Consequently, the game carries a future-organic look to it, not unlike many of the *Phantasy Star* games.

Gameplay is of the hack 'n' slash variety, and this is where the game may run into a few snags. While there's nothing wrong with straightforward action games, the controls in 20XX are feeling a bit too stiff, at least at this early stage. Additionally, while there are special attacks, dodges, and counters, their execution feels slightly too random. We're hopeful



that will be tweaked a bit before the game's release.

Still, though the core gameplay could use some refinement, 20XX has an incredible license behind it. This classic tale may yet have what it takes to pull the right strings in gamers'

▲ Similar to Shinobi, Naoe can dash towards and around enemies, in order to get in some quick attacks. They won't even know what hit them.

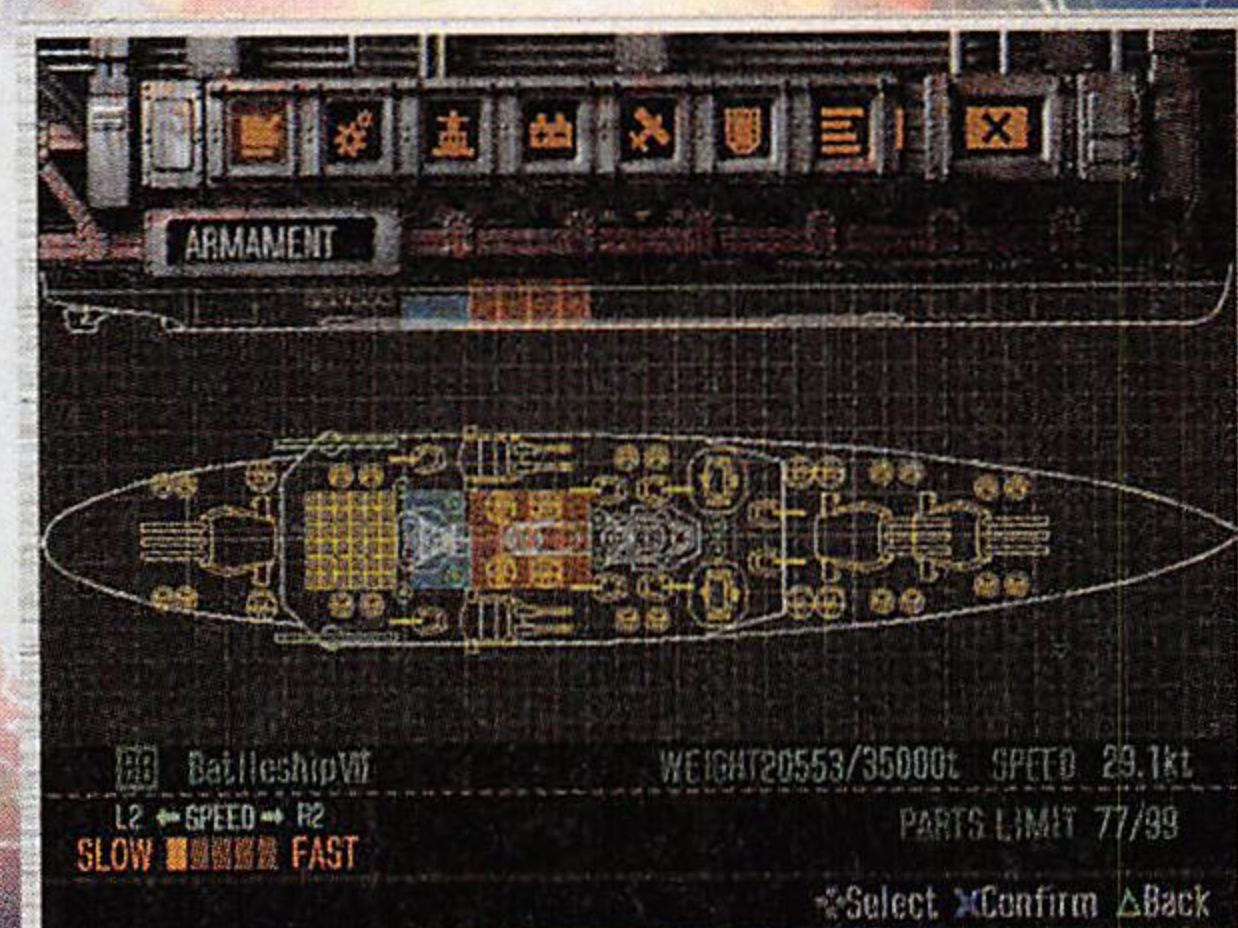
hearts. We'll just have to see if the story and the action truly do deliver.

KAISER HWANG/STEPHEN FROST

koei™
www.koei.com

thanks!
25th
KOEI's 25th Anniversary

A New Threat is on the Horizon.



Construct battleships, carriers, destroyers and more!



Command New Tactical Battle Groups!



New bird's eye view of the battle sector

NAVAL OPS™ COMMANDER

This is not a drill. This is Naval Ops™: Commander. Arm your ship with a spectrum of over 1,000 parts: weapons, defensive hardware, propulsion systems, and 100 aircraft. Choose from 100+ combat-ready vessels or invest in new technology to design your own. Lead your battle group into the cold waters of danger to locate and destroy an armada of Superships. Over 80 deadly missions await. Prepare to fire.

From the Creators of Naval Ops: Warship Gunner™
MARCH 2004



Violence

3DCGデザイナー募集中!!

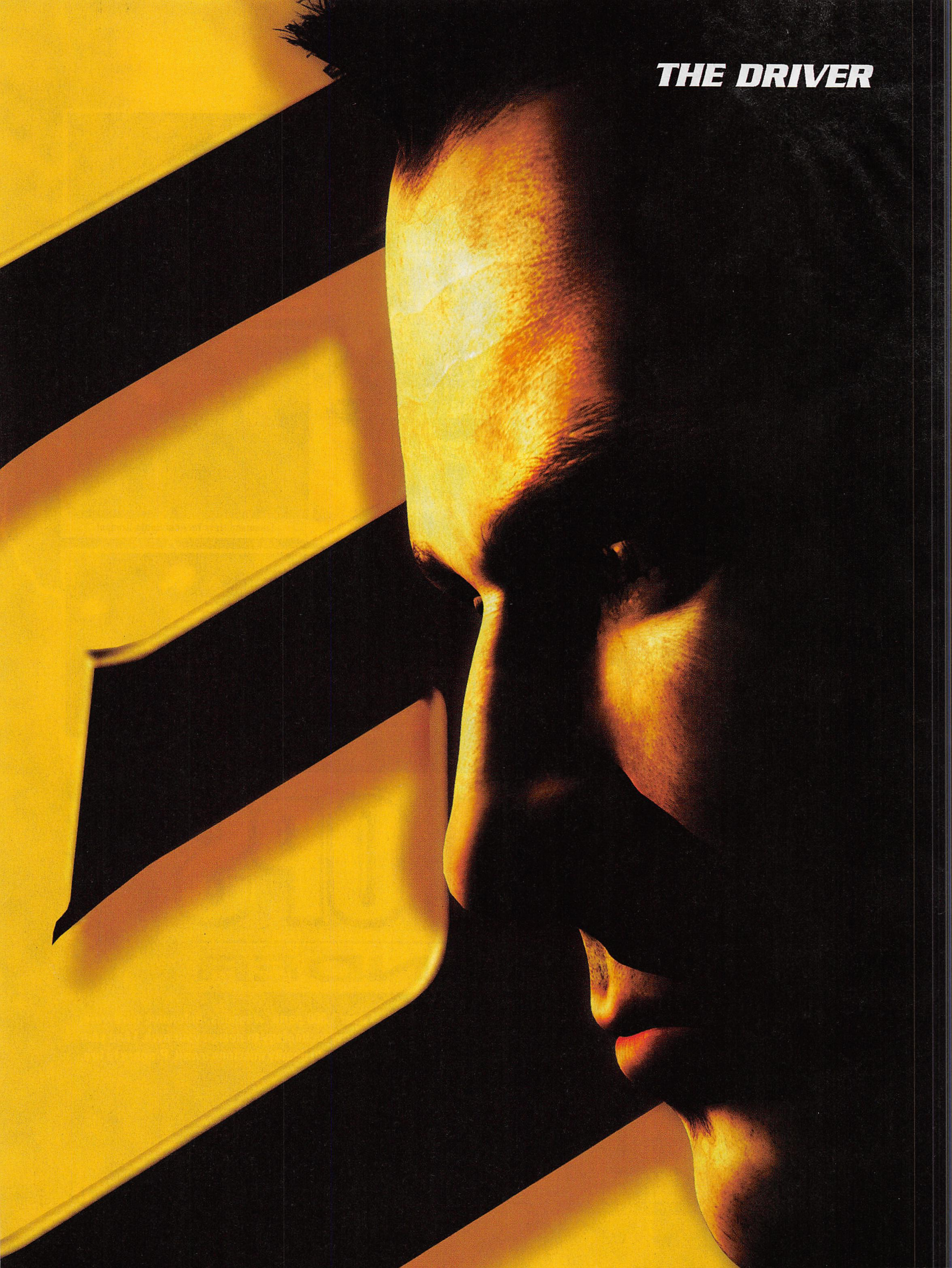
勤務地: カナダまたは日本 応募方法など詳細は
www.koei.co.jp/html/joboffer をご覧ください。

Naval Ops, Warship Gunner, and the KOEI logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of KOEI Co., Ltd. ©2002-2004 MICROCABIN CORP./KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

PlayStation®2



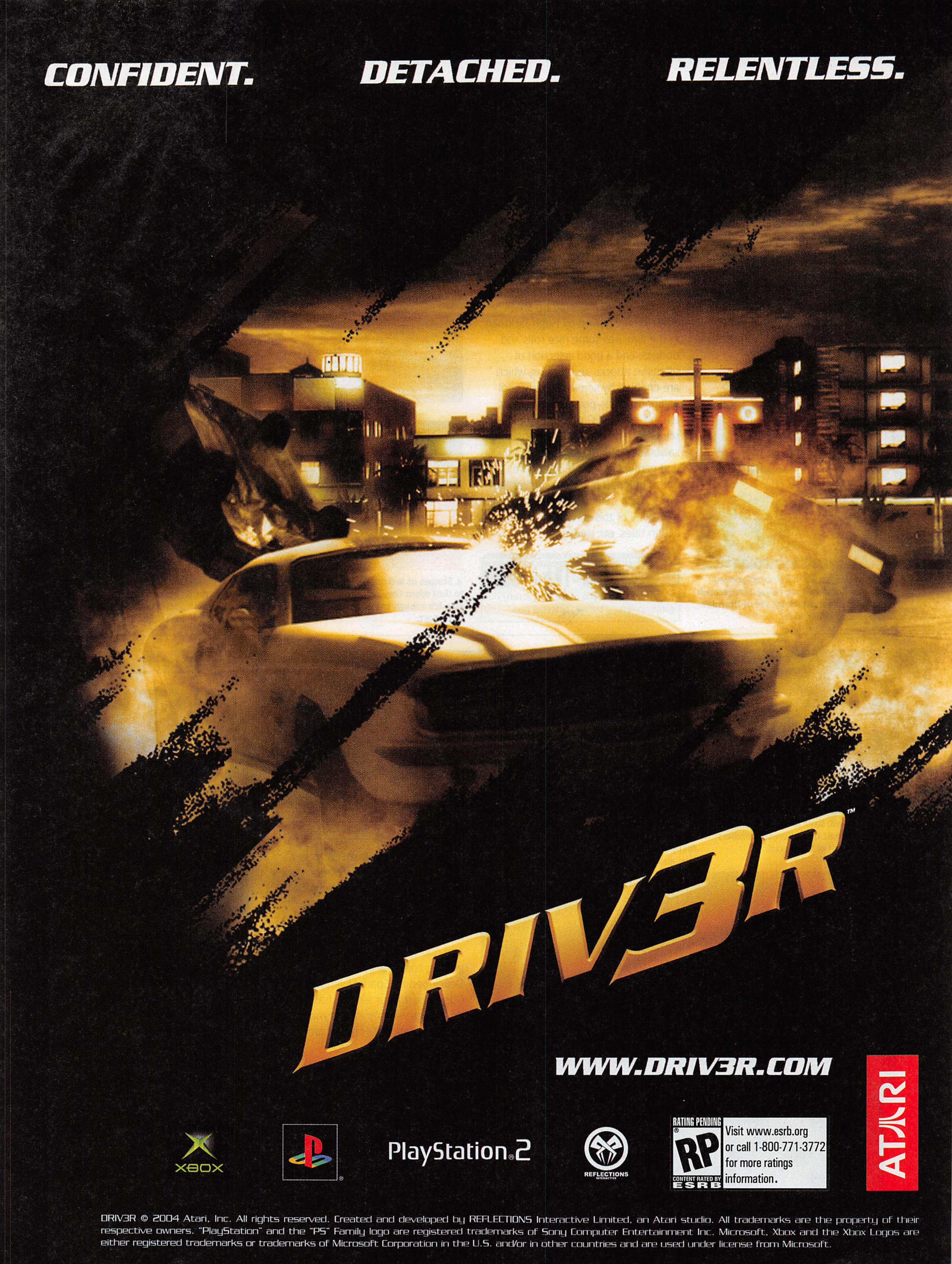
THE DRIVER



CONFIDENT.

DETACHED.

RELENTLESS.



DRIV3R™

WWW.DRIV3R.COM



PlayStation®2



Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more ratings
information.

ATARI

DRIV3R © 2004 Atari, Inc. All rights reserved. Created and developed by REFLECTIONS Interactive Limited, an Atari studio. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

VAN HELSING

What if Dante hunted vampires?

GAME INFO PUB VIVENDI UNIVERSAL | DEV SAFFIRE | TYPE ACTION | REL DATE MAY | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING PENDING

With the success of its revived *Mummy* film franchise, Universal is giving some of its other classic horror

franchises some love. This summer, it's all about Van Helsing, 19th century vampire hunter extraordinaire, who will face off against Dracula, Frankenstein, and the Wolfman in



▲ One of the game's more action-packed sequences finds our hero riding a stagecoach that comes under attack by one of Dracula's brides. Spooky, huh, kids?

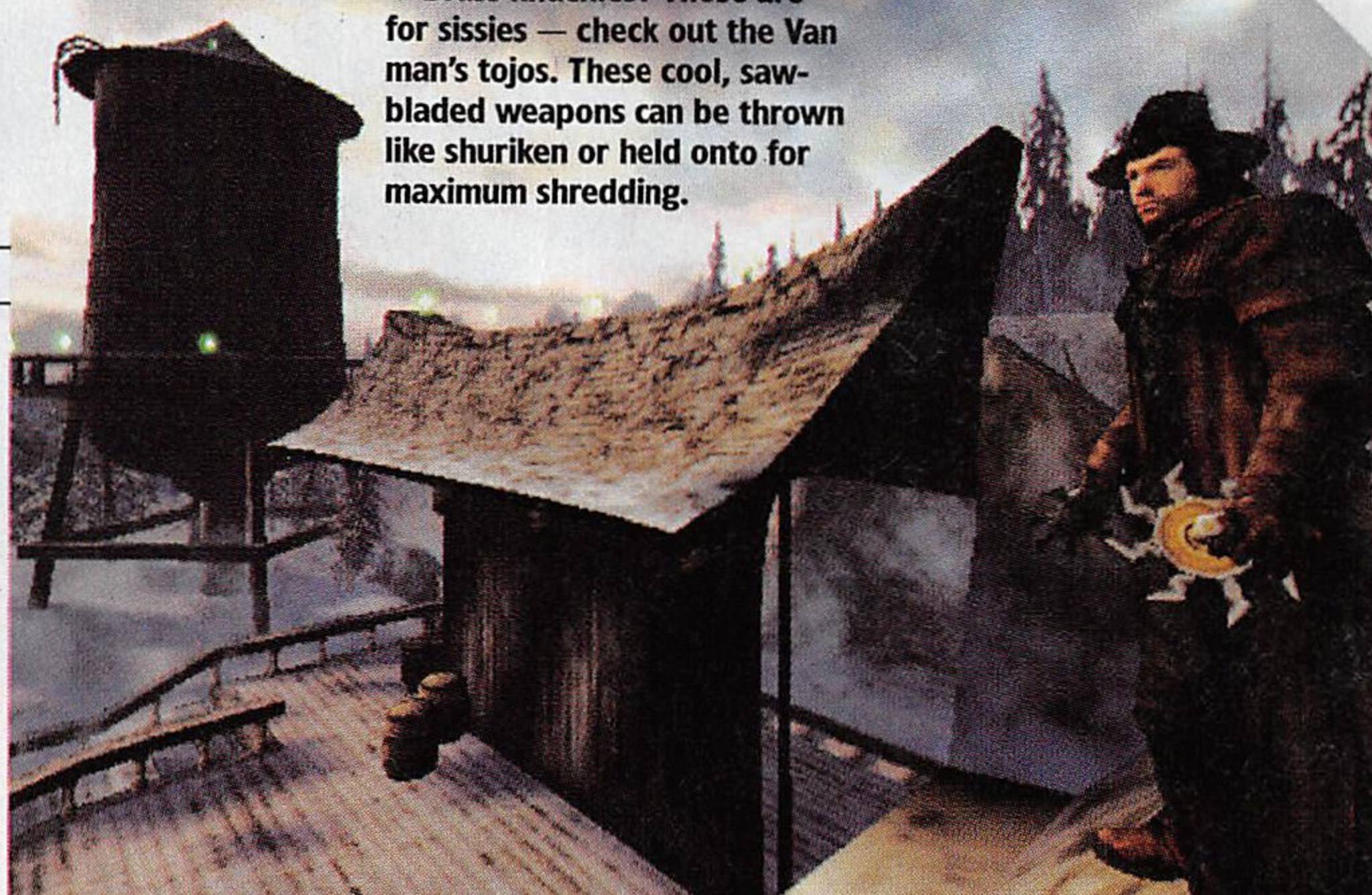
both the upcoming film and the third person action title.

The game itself is definitely doing its best *Devil May Cry* imitation, but if it pulls it off, this could be great. Van Helsing, played by Hugh Jackman in the film, has some nice rolls and dodges, and a good selection of offensive attacks and juggles, which are enabled by some seriously cool weapons: a gas-powered crossbow, a hand-cranked Gatling gun, dual scimitars, and a pair of hand-held sawblades called tojos. Both graphics and gameplay need a little more polish before it hits store shelves, but *Van Helsing* definitely has the potential to be one of this summer's hottest action titles. **ERIC BRATCHER**

THE BUZZ

It's trying to clone one of the best action games in history. Definite potential here.

▼ Brass knuckles? Those are for sissies — check out the Van man's tojos. These cool, saw-bladed weapons can be thrown like shuriken or held onto for maximum shredding.



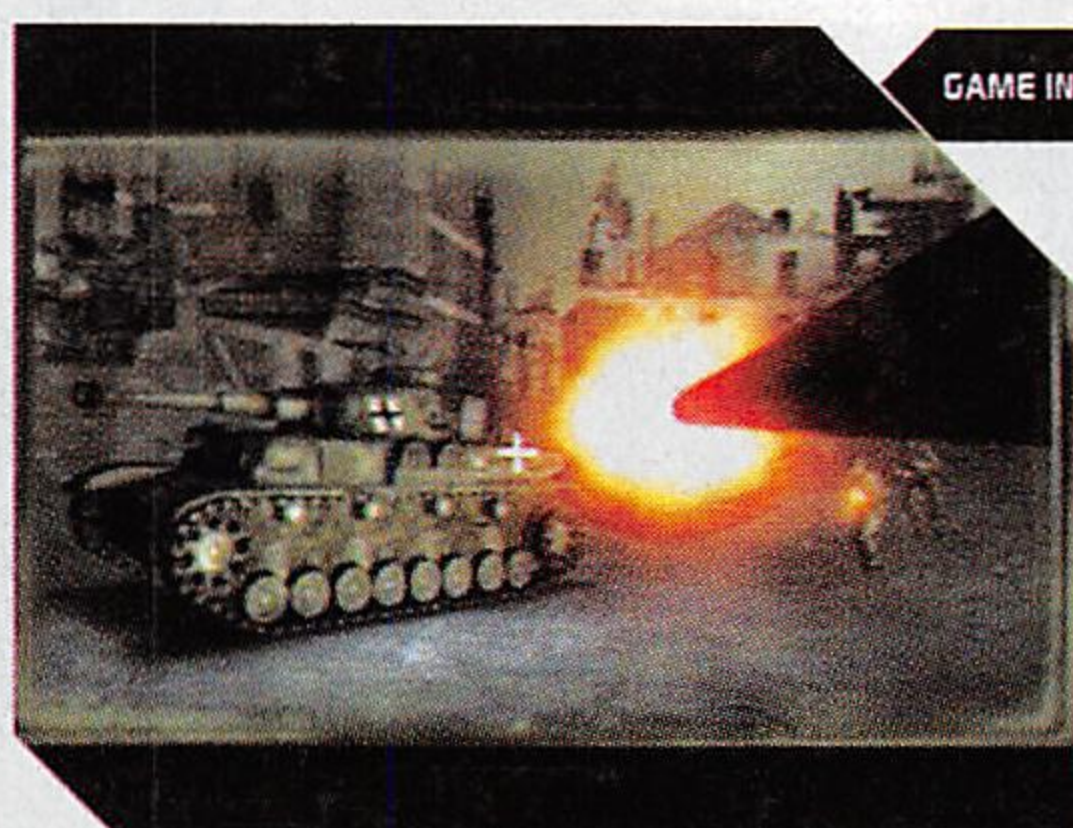
▲ Statues of archangels are way tougher to dust when they come to life and attack you. It's enough to make a guy lose his love of fine art.



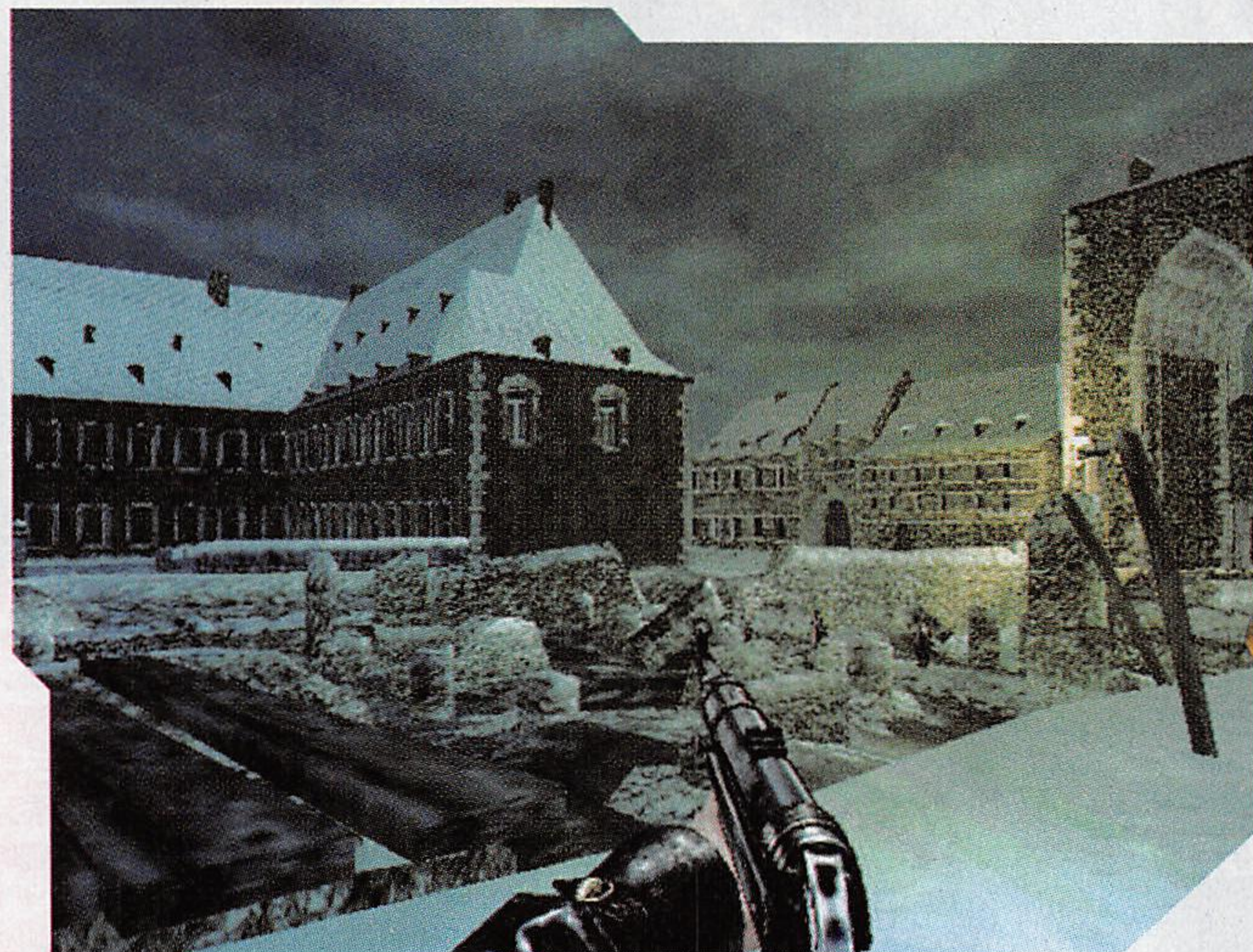
▲ Van Helsing has quite an array of Batman-like toys for an old schooler. Most are weapons, but some, like this hookshot, help him track evil to its lair.



▲ Your aim will have to be dead-on if you hope to halt these German bombers on their assault of Stalingrad.



▲ You'll be able to control a variety of vehicles, such as this tank. Right now, you drive from a first-person perspective, but a third-person view may also be included.



▲ The tiny Belgium town of Stavlov is just one of the many locations you'll find yourself fighting in to liberate it from the Nazis.

GAME INFO PUB ACTIVISION | DEV SPARK UNLTD. | REL DATE FALL/WINTER | TYPE FPS | MAX PLAYERS TBA | ESRB PENDING

CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR

Can Activision win the war against EA?

Over the last few years, the *Medal of Honor* series has grown to become the definitive WWII gaming experience. That

may shortly change, however, as Activision is readying its own "big gun" to compete in the heated genre. Developed by Spark Unlimited, *Call of Duty: Finest Hour* already has a major advantage — many former members of the *MOH* teams are

THE BUZZ

If the PC game is any indication, this all-new console version is going to rock!

working on it. That should hopefully mean that the attention to detail and accuracy will be staggering and that the overall experience of playing the game will be as close to reality as possible.

Unfortunately, little information on the title is currently available, but we did manage to sneak out these few screenshots from behind enemy lines. One look at them and you can already see the potential that this new franchise will almost certainly deliver on. So, grab your rifle and get ready. We're going to do some serious reconnaissance on this game over the next few issues. **STEPHEN FROST**



PITFALL: THE LOST EXPEDITION

The classic gets a modern-day makeover

GAME INFO | PUB ACTIVISION | DEV EDGE OF REALITY | TYPE ACTION | REL DATE FEB. | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING EVERYONE

We covered *The Lost Expedition* a while back, but for those of you who missed it, we're pleased to report that this is one title that's coming along swimmingly. Based on the classic Activision title, *Pitfall* takes the vine-swinging, crocodile-jumping, scorpion-dodging action and breathes new life into it.

Pitfall Harry must race through jungles, hop across ice drifts and explore the corners of the Earth as he tries to outrace a rival explorer intent on uncovering ancient artifacts and creating a doomsday weapon (perhaps the developers watched *Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life* one too many times).

Activision promises that the game will avoid the tired style of play so prevalent in current adventure titles and instead feature branching pathways, scores of gadgets and the ability to turn minor techniques into heroic feats. The developers have even included the Havok physics engine for unprecedented realism.

DOUG TRUEMAN



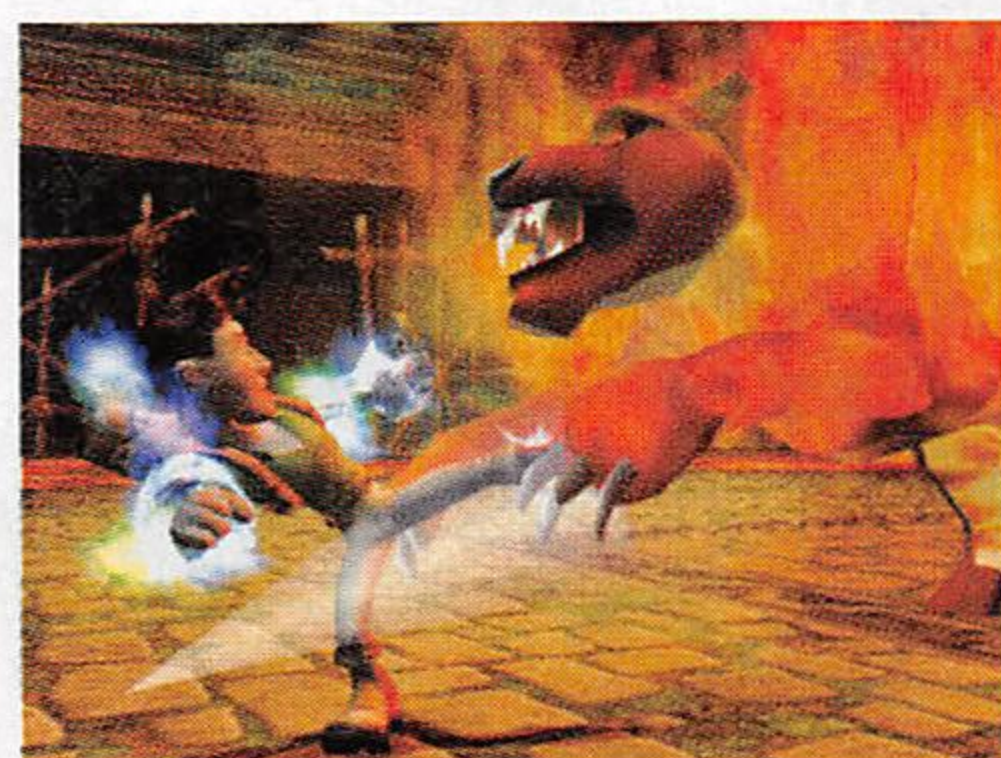
▲ The classic vine swinging of old has definitely returned and it's a whole lot cooler now. We felt like Tarzan.



▲ Those crocodiles aren't that dangerous if they're frozen, but they certainly do make nice rafts.



▲ The bug-looking things continuously drop snowballs on you, so you'll have to keep moving around to avoid them.



▲ A lot of the creature designs are pretty cool. Check out this fire-beast, which seems to look worse than he actually is.

THE BUZZ
This is one game that's come a long way and looks to make the series proud.



▲ While the initial number of available characters will be limited, you can see there are a ton of them to unlock.

► The Oni Mode is definitely for the more advanced players, as it severely limits the number of mistakes that you're allowed to have.



▲ The music selection screen is now a bit different, but the number of songs has certainly increased by a fair amount.

GAME INFO | PUB KONAMI | DEV KONAMI | REL DATE FALL | TYPE MUSIC | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB EVERYONE

DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION EXTREME

The popular franchise goes a bit extreme!

While it may not come as a surprise to many, Konami has just recently announced the latest title in

its massively successful *DDR* series, *Dance Dance Revolution Extreme*. Building upon the five sequels before it, *Extreme* is looking to take the series even further by throwing in even more songs, more features and several new game modes.

The game will showcase over 100 minutes of licensed and original dance music, along with a number of hit videos, in order to get those feet moving. Along with that, the "Oni Mode", which first appeared in the *DDRMAX Dance Dance Revolution*, has returned, but now as a fully realized feature. For those who don't remember, the Oni Mode was geared towards the more experienced of dancers, as it only allowed for a total of four mistakes in a row during the



▲ It's amazing how far this series has come from its very simply beginnings. Who would have thought that a dancing game would become this popular?

THE BUZZ
With the new modes and tons of cool songs, this could be the best *DDR* game yet.

entire game. Now, that's challenging! Another bonus, that fans should be excited about, is the inclusion of a "Mission Mode," where you'll have to complete specific dance challenges in order to progress on.

DDR Extreme is slated for a Fall release, but we should have more on it in upcoming issues. Until then, see you on the dance floor. **STEPHEN FROST**

FIGHT NIGHT 2004

GAME INFO

PUB EA SPORTS

DEV NUXF/EA CANADA

TYPE SPORTS

REL DATE MARCH

MAX PLAYERS TWO

ESRB RATING PENDING

EA's boxing series is back with a vengeance

Boxing isn't about fireballs and air throws — it's about two fighters with no weapons, but their fists and no shield, but their own bodies. It's subtle, it's primal, and it's extremely physical. Thus, a boxing game needs to recreate that physicality and make you, the player, feel every

punch or it won't hold your interest. Luckily, thanks to a new control scheme that's both comprehensive and incredibly organic, *Fight Night 2004* definitely has our attention.

All punches in *FN2004* are thrown using the right analog stick: diagonally up and to the right is a right jab, down and a quarter circle to the left is a left uppercut, and so on. Plus, by holding down **RB**, you can shift to a defensive posture and use the stick to bob and weave, even hand block. You can feign punches, work the body until your target's guard drops, and then switch to the head and watch damage erupt on his face in real time. **ERIC BRATCHER**



▲ Yes, the game does have life bars and all that stuff, but you can toggle it off for a more realistic experience.

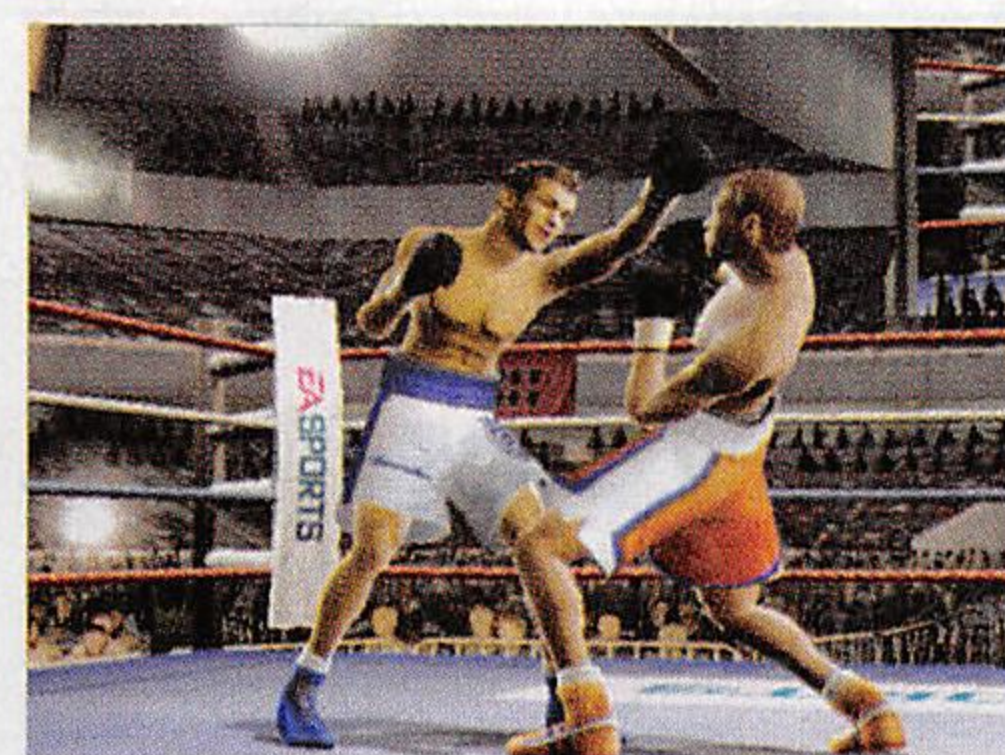
THE BUZZ
Deep gameplay, intuitive controls, and solid graphics could make this "The Greatest".



▲ If you work one side of an opponent's body, his guard on that side will eventually begin to deteriorate — especially if his vision is impaired by blood or swelling.



▲ A gorgeously-modeled Roy Jones, Jr. gently wipes the sweat from his buddy's brow. If this keeps up, somebody's face is going to show some heavy damage.



▲ The **RB** button acts as a shift key, enabling you to plant your feet and dodge beautifully before resuming the pummeling.



▲ With a race against time, you're going to have to try and find all the Mini-cons before the Decepticons do.



▲ Giant robots might seem out of place in environments like this, but that's what makes the game so interesting.

GAME INFO

PUB ATARI

DEV MELBOURNE HOUSE

REL DATE MAY

TYPE ACTION

MAX PLAYERS ONE

ESRB PENDING

TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

Is this the first decent Transformers game?

Atari apparently felt our nostalgic pangs and is bringing us something we've waited a long time for: a quality Transformers game.

Based on the current cartoon series of the same name, *Armada* takes place in an alternate universe where the Autobots and Decepticons fight over control of the Mini-cons, a long-lost breed of robots that grant the Transformers enhanced powers.

Taking control of Hot Shot, Red Alert, or Optimus Prime, players will navigate through eight sizeable environments as they shoot, transform, and drive their way to the next



► Even after all these years, Optimus Prime still remains the coolest Transformer. Screw Rodimus!

objective. It's not rocket science by any means, but it's the license that carries the weight here.

Even in its early stage, *Armada* shows promise. The graphics, while a little rough, feature a nice aesthetic, and with some improved AI, the action could be tight. We wish there were more emphasis on the transforming aspect of the game, but maybe there's more here than meets the eye.

KAISER HWANG/STEPHEN FROST



▲ Despite his redesign for the series, Optimus Prime looks as cool as ever. He's definitely going to be able to prove why he's the leader in this game.

THE BUZZ
It may seem a bit basic, but there's going to be lots of action for fans to discover

“★★★★★”
—Maxim.com

“BEST ACTION GAME”
—Spike TV Video Game Awards

“9/10”
—IGN.com



THIS IS TRUE CRIME™ STREETS OF LA™



10 GRAND PRIZES

Motorola® i730 phone and a
True Crime™ game* and poster

10 FIRST PRIZES

PUMA® gear and a
True Crime™ game* and poster

10 SECOND PRIZES

True Crime™ game*, sweatshirt and poster

ENTER TO WIN AT:

www.sweepstakes.truecrimela.com



The sweepstakes begins at 12:00 am Pacific Time ("PT") on January 25, 2004 and ends at 11:59 pm PT on April 25, 2004. No purchase necessary to enter or win. Must be 17 years of age or older to enter. See web site for official rules and regulations. *Platform of choice, subject to availability.

COMING SOON TO PC. Visit truecrimela.com for exclusive game clips and soundtrack samples.



Blood and Gore
Mature Sexual Themes
Strong Language
Violence



PlayStation 2



© 2004 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and True Crime and Streets of LA are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Developed by Luxoflux. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All rights reserved. TM, © and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. MOTOROLA and the Stylized M Logo are registered in the US Patent & Trademark Office. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

ACTIVISION
activision.com

GAME INFO PUB EIDOS | DEV IO INTERACTIVE | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | RELEASE DATE SPRING | ESRB PENDING

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

The first *Hitman* game failed to deliver a completely cohesive package. *Hitman 2*, however, did most things right. But it looks like *Contracts*, the third in the series, will be the game that truly hits the proverbial nail on the head.

Set against a Parisian backdrop, *Contracts* promises the requisite technical upgrades (graphics, physics, etc), as well as numerous gameplay advancements. These include impro-

visational weaponry (i.e. pool sticks), an overhauled control scheme, and a learning curve that's actually gradual.

What we're excited about is the mental storyline that delves into the repressed psyche of a killer. *Contracts* ships this spring. KAISER HWANG

THE BUZZ

We're really excited about getting into the *Hitman's* head. Could be scary...

▼ The new technology behind the enhanced game engine definitely helps to make everything look so much better and much more realistic.

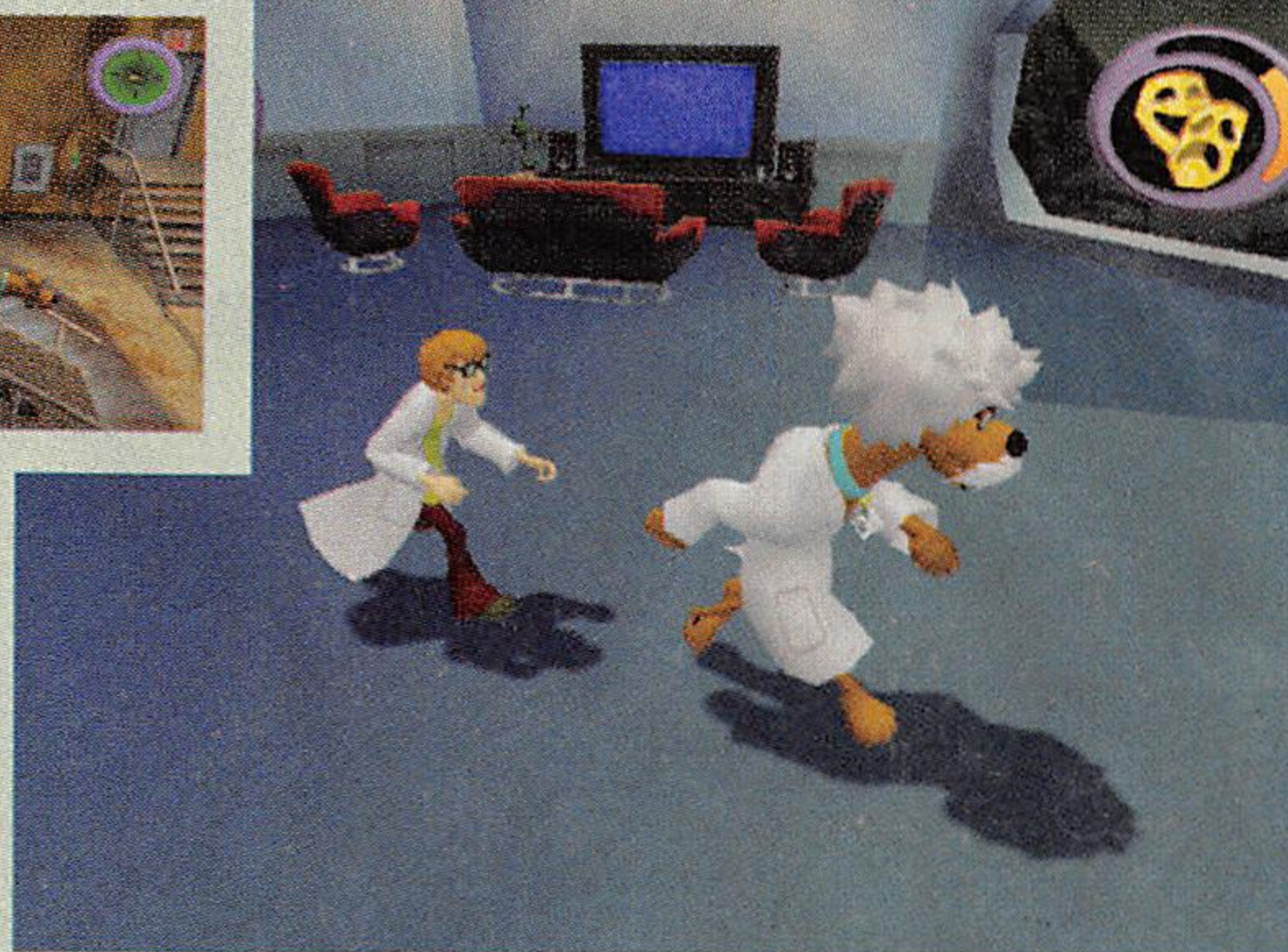


▲ Time has definitely not mellowed Agent 47. Actually, he seems to be even more ruthless than before.

GAME INFO PUB THQ | DEV THQ | MAX PLAYERS ONE | TYPE ADVENTURE | REL MARCH | ESRB PENDING



▲ From the movie sets to the classic disguises, this will be about as close as you can get to the classic cartoon series. We definitely look forward to solving this mystery.



SCOOBY DOO: MYSTERY MAYHEM

This March, gamers will have yet another chance to solve a ghastly mystery in *Scooby-Doo: Mystery Mayhem*. Like any good

Scooby adventure, the game will feature its fair share of puzzle solving, clue searching, monster catching and out-running. Players can even switch between Shaggy and Scooby — each with their own abilities — on the fly with the press of a button.

Also in line with the series are the

environments, complete with movie set, Wild West, and creepy laboratory themes. Additionally, the game features the voice talent from the *Scooby-Doo* television show — a must for a license-based game.

KAISER HWANG

THE BUZZ

The only thing that could make this title better is the inclusion of Scooby Snax!



▲ You can get some pretty serious air in this game, if you time your jumps just right. Look at the elevation on that yellow bike.



▲ The developers say that the competition will be challenging, but still quite fair. You'll definitely have to earn the lead, though.



MTX: MOTOTRAX

The motocross field gets one more competitor

Players who purchased *Tony Hawk's Underground* might have noticed that Activision slipped in a demo for their upcoming racer *MTX: Mototrax* (if you missed it, you can access it at the bottom of the main menu).

The heart of the game is the single player mode that lets gamers take

an unknown biker and raise him to superstardom by competing in races across over twenty-five courses that range from the Bayou to the Hawaiian Islands. Cash from victories can be used to purchase better bikes, unlock free-ride areas, or new challenges. The game supports hair-raising races with up to seven CPU opponents, and up to four human opponents via the

GAME INFO PUB ACTIVISION | DEV LEFT FIELD | REL DATE MARCH | TYPE RACING | MAX PLAYERS FOUR | ESRB PENDING



▲ Even with the large number of racers on-screen, the detail in the individual characters is quite high. They certainly didn't skimp on the polygon counts.

network adaptor.

Activision promises that *MTX* will be the fastest motocross racer ever, playing at a breakneck 60 frames per second. Scores of tricks will be included for adrenaline junkies, and biking legend Travis Pastrana will be on board to show rookies how to

handle 125, 250 and 450cc cycles.

JEREMY DUNHAM

THE BUZZ

Interesting course designs and tricks to perform could make this a serious contender.

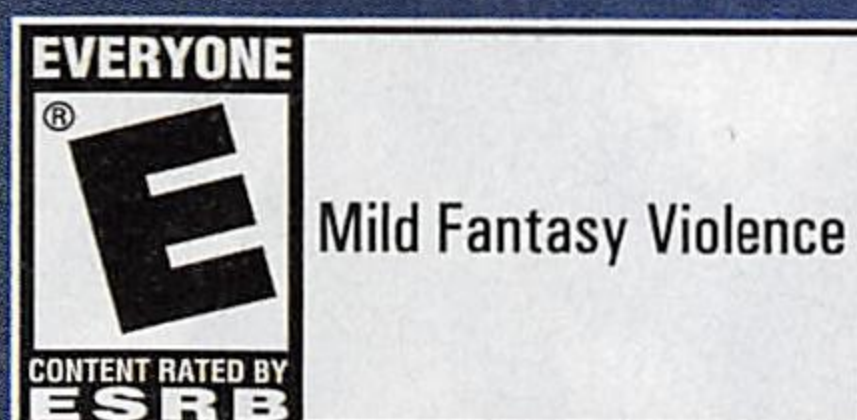


IT'S TIME FOR SOME NEW HEROES.



SONIC HEROES

It's Sonic Heroes, the all new game with an all new way to play. A revolutionary team-based system will have you switching characters on the fly. Twelve different heroes, four different teams and three different consoles make for one new game that never gets old.



PlayStation®2



Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. SEGA, the SEGA logo, Sonic Heroes and Sonic The Hedgehog are either registered trademarks or trademarks of SEGA CORPORATION. Original Game ©SEGA ©SONICTEAM/SEGA, 2003. All Rights Reserved. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

STRATEGY

84 Champions Of Norrath

88 Culdcept



CODES

89 Batman: ROST



87 Dragonball-Z: Budokai 2

87 Final Fantasy X-2

89 Fugitive Hunter: WOT

87 I-Ninja



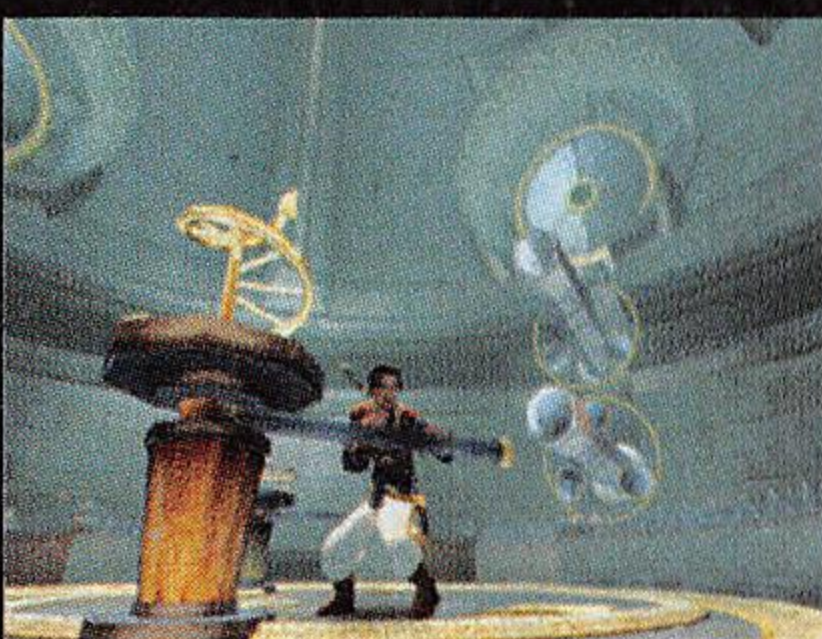
87 Prince Of Persia: SOT

89 PSM Challenge

89 Teenage Mutant Turtles

89 Tony Hawk's UG

Prince Of Persia, p. 87



Fugitive Hunter, p. 89



◀ The Aqueous Kretch isn't quite as tough as he seems. Just slash/block/repeat and you should be fine.

CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH: REALMS OF EVERQUEST

PSM and Snowblind cooperate to teach you how to kick ass online

ONLY IN
PSM
INSIDER TIPS

Basic Gameplay Hints

CAREFUL WITH YOUR COOKING

Items like Frost Shards and pieces of Ghoulish flesh can give your weapons and armor huge powers, but save before combining anything together; the results are permanent, and you might not like what you get.

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

Gate scrolls cost 150 coins. What this means is, anytime you've collected excess booty worth more than 150 coins, it's worth your while to zap yourself back to town and sell it for profit. It's time consuming, but it makes sure you have the money to buy anything you want when you enter a shop and see some must-have rare item on the shelf. Speaking of which, if there's something you desperately need, but it isn't in stock, gate or teleport away from a store to force the stock to rotate, then return to examine the new supply.

STONEWALL JACKSON WAS A POOR STRATEGIST

There's a reason you're faster on your feet than most enemies. Even wimpy monsters like Giant Ants and Fire Beetles can quickly whittle

▶ What's green and slimy and evil?



<< THERE'S A REASON YOU'RE FASTER ON YOUR FEET THAN MOST ENEMIES >>

down your health if they surround you. Don't be afraid to run away and regroup.

DON'T BE A DRUNK

There's no reason to carry 20 or 30 health potions at once. Those things weigh quite a bit, and that encumbrance could be put to better use carrying loot or arrows.

No thieves in Norrath

Don't waste time and strength carrying your keepsakes around everywhere you go. You can pile weapons, armor, arrows, potions, and anything else you value on the ground, and not only will the game remember where it is, nobody will take it. We like to dump things beside the stores. Just be sure to pick it up before fighting the final boss of each act, because you can't return for it after you've moved on to a new act.

TRADE KILLING BLOWS FOR KILLING GLOWS

If an enemy has a glow about it, that means they're wielding a magical weapon and are therefore much more dangerous than their less well-equipped peers. Kill them first, but don't expect to get that weapon for killing them because you usually won't.

BEAT-ROCKING BLOCKS

Don't overlook the importance of the block button **[B]**. It can deflect arrows, spears, and most physical blows as well. However, it can't stop magical attacks or some physical strikes, so don't think that you're invulnerable just because you're blocking.

GATES ARE ALWAYS OPEN

Gate scrolls even work during most boss battles, which can be nice if you run short on potions or arrows. They also act as checkpoints, so if you need to preserve your progress, but a save point is nowhere in sight, just gate to town and then pop right back.

ACCESSORIZE LIKE AN ACTRESS ON OSCAR NIGHT

Jewelry like earrings, chokers, and rings boast some very positive effects and are very light, so you can carry tons of them. Buy or collect different sets designed to protect against specific classes of attack: poison, magic, fire, or cold-based. Then, switch them around to maximize your protection against a given level's dominant enemy types.

THERE'S ROOM TO ZOOM

There are three levels of camera zoom, and the best results come from swapping between them frequently. The middle cam gives the best forward view, but the close-in camera looks far better and makes hand-to-hand blocking and targeting much easier. The distant cam is less useful, but comes in handy in places like Vanarhost's castle, where the archways obscure your vision.

THINKING ABOUT BLINKING

In multiplayer, you'll notice a colored circle around each combatant's feet. If a character's halo begins to blink, it means that they are near death. Take the

hint and either retreat if it's your character or go to that character's rescue if it's someone else.

SHARING IS CARING

Experience points are shared during multiplayer matches, with the character who deals the final blow getting a tiny bonus. So don't steal kills, because it's awful sportsmanship and it just isn't worth it.

Boss Guide

You'll have to progress through Norrath several times in order to reach your XP maximum, but we'll walk you through the first playthrough just to make sure you're ready to join us online.

ORC LEADER

This guy's the first real boss you'll meet, but he won't be the last. As with most of the game's bosses, there's at least one specific strategy that brings him down in a hurry. In this case, it's blocking. Block his flurries, and be aware that some of his attacks break through your guard. Don't let him corner you, and run away and sip a potion anytime he lands even a single hit, because his combos can take off a huge chunk of health at a time. We'd recommend staying mobile and filling him full of arrows from afar, but you can also watch his actions and hack away anytime he pauses to taunt you.



▲ The orc leader is a good primer for the boss battles to come: don't let him corner you!

SHELOX

This mammoth arachnid looks tougher than she actually is, but you have to conquer your fear to exploit her weakness. The key is to get in very close to her — as close as you can — and run around to her sides, forcing her to constantly swivel around to face you. Anytime she jumps up into the air and squeals when landing, slash at her a couple times and continue running sideways. This will keep her from connecting with most of her attacks.

► Shelox is a lot to deal with head-on, but her flanks are vulnerable.



ANT QUEEN

Here's another fairly challenging boss. You can block her stings — in fact, you must block them, or it's virtually guaranteed that she'll skewer you to death. She will land eventually, at which time you should try to shoot her or cut into her flanks. This will be complicated by the hordes of additional ants that will be following you two around. While her brood can serve as a buffer between you and the Queen, they can also do damage of their own, so be careful, and try to stay fairly stationary to reduce the number of ants chasing you.

There's also a sneakier way to dispatch the queen. If you can find a column a short distance from the wall in one edge of the battlefield, go there and run between the column and the wall. There, slaughter the smaller, accessory ants until they stop appearing. Then, taunt the queen into pursuing you. She'll be unable to pass between the column and the wall, so you can run through the gap and fill her full of arrows from a safe location.

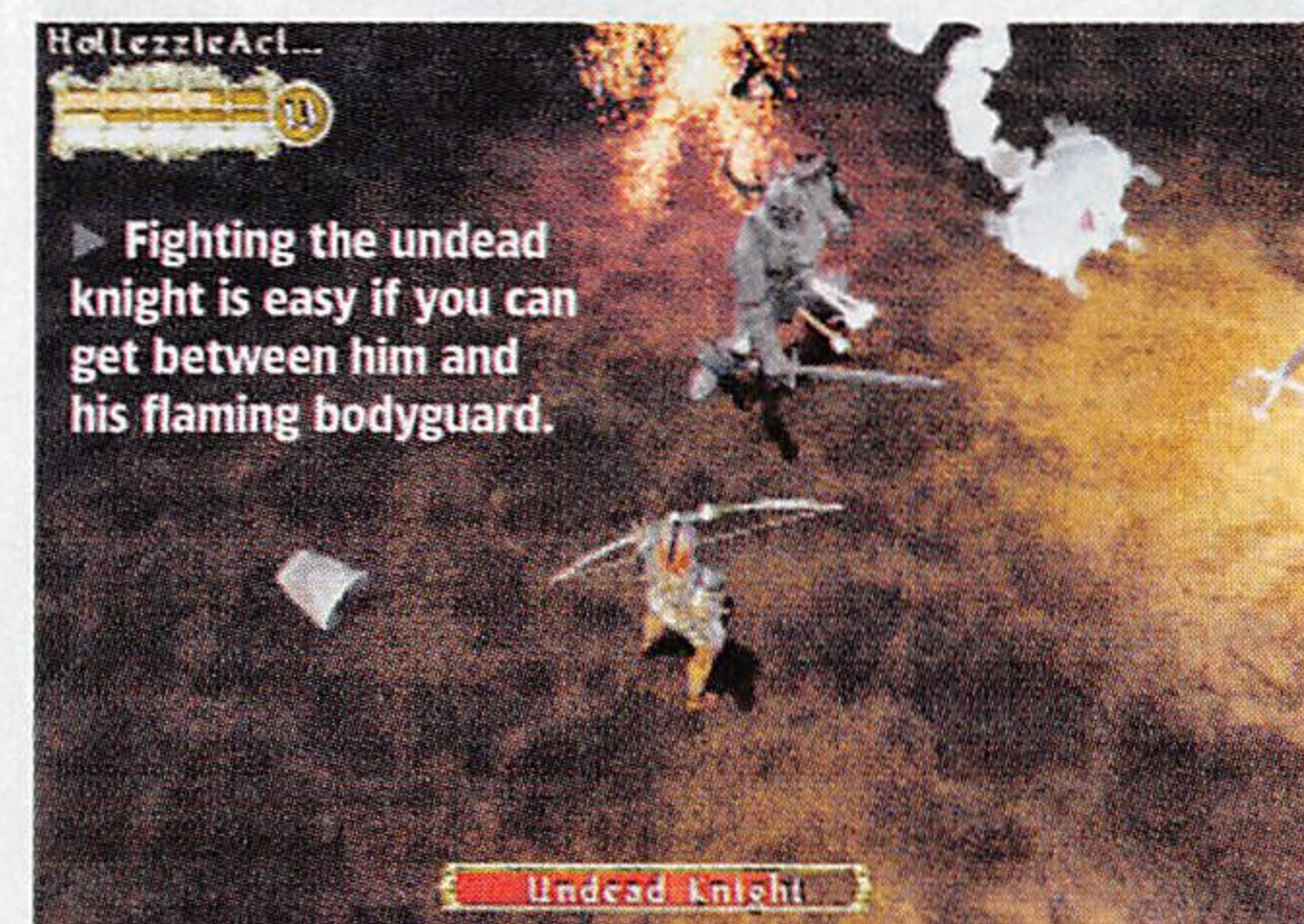


▲ It's best not to try to take on the ant queen in open area: use the surrounding terrain and her own minions to keep your distance.

UNDEAD ARMY

Don't worry — you can take these guys. First, retreat back into the doorway you just entered to give yourself a narrow area to defend, and just lay into the undead hordes until their numbers are more manageable.

The Undead Knight is like fighting two bosses, because he'll constantly summon a flame form to block your attacks. The trick is to just avoid the flame form, and to stay close enough to the bone knight so that he doesn't respawn the flame knight. Then, it's just a matter of running in a circle around the flame form so that you can get a clear shot at the bone knight. We'd recommend using arrows and keeping your distance — he's got a very long reach.



► Fighting the undead knight is easy if you can get between him and his flaming bodyguard.

LORD VANARHOST

Oddly, this fellow isn't too tough if you block his opening flurry. He'll perform some diving attacks, but they won't do much damage. Try to block them, and slash away any time he comes close to you — you'll carve him like a turkey.



▲ The V-man is fairly fragile if you can just get close enough to him.

TARSKUK

This giant fellow is ridiculously strong and durable, but it's possible to dispatch him without really getting into a fight. He can't walk down narrow passageways, so just pelt him with arrows from afar, and he'll never lay a club on you.



▲ Before getting in close with Tarsuk, stick him with so many arrows that it looks like he's wearing a grass skirt.

KING MORMAZ

Mormaz himself isn't much of a fighter. However, he'll continually summon underlings to get in your way. Anti-poison jewelry will help, but what you really want to do is just be patient. Kill his henchmen as they spawn, and take a swing or shot at the physically fragile Mormaz anytime you can squeeze one in. Projectile attacks and pets are especially helpful here.



▲ King Mormaz goes down quickly if you can get through his blockers.

CLOUD GIANT KING

Believe it or not, this guy's a pushover. Don't waste

time with archery — just wait until he slams his staff into the ground, avoid the resulting lightning by running around him, and lay a four or five-hit combo on him before retreating. Repeat.

AQUEOUS KRETCH

Recreate your giant spider and ant strategies here. Hang him up on the scenery and pound him from afar (possibly from outside his door), or just run circles around him and slash at his flanks.

This enemy also seems very hesitant to attack with a combo, so it's possible to adopt a "taking turns" strategy with him. Just block until he attacks once, drop your block and press the attack button once, then block again. He'll try another single attack, you retaliate with a single attack, and so on. You'll be making seafood gumbo in no time. Incidentally, this strategy tends to work well with the grim reaper enemies as well.

ARENA BEAST

Like many big enemies, the Arena Beast gets hung up on the scenery, so run around the columns if you need to create some distance. If you have a pet, let them corner him and shoot it from afar. Alternately, get in very close and swing away, but be sure to heal when his attacks connect.

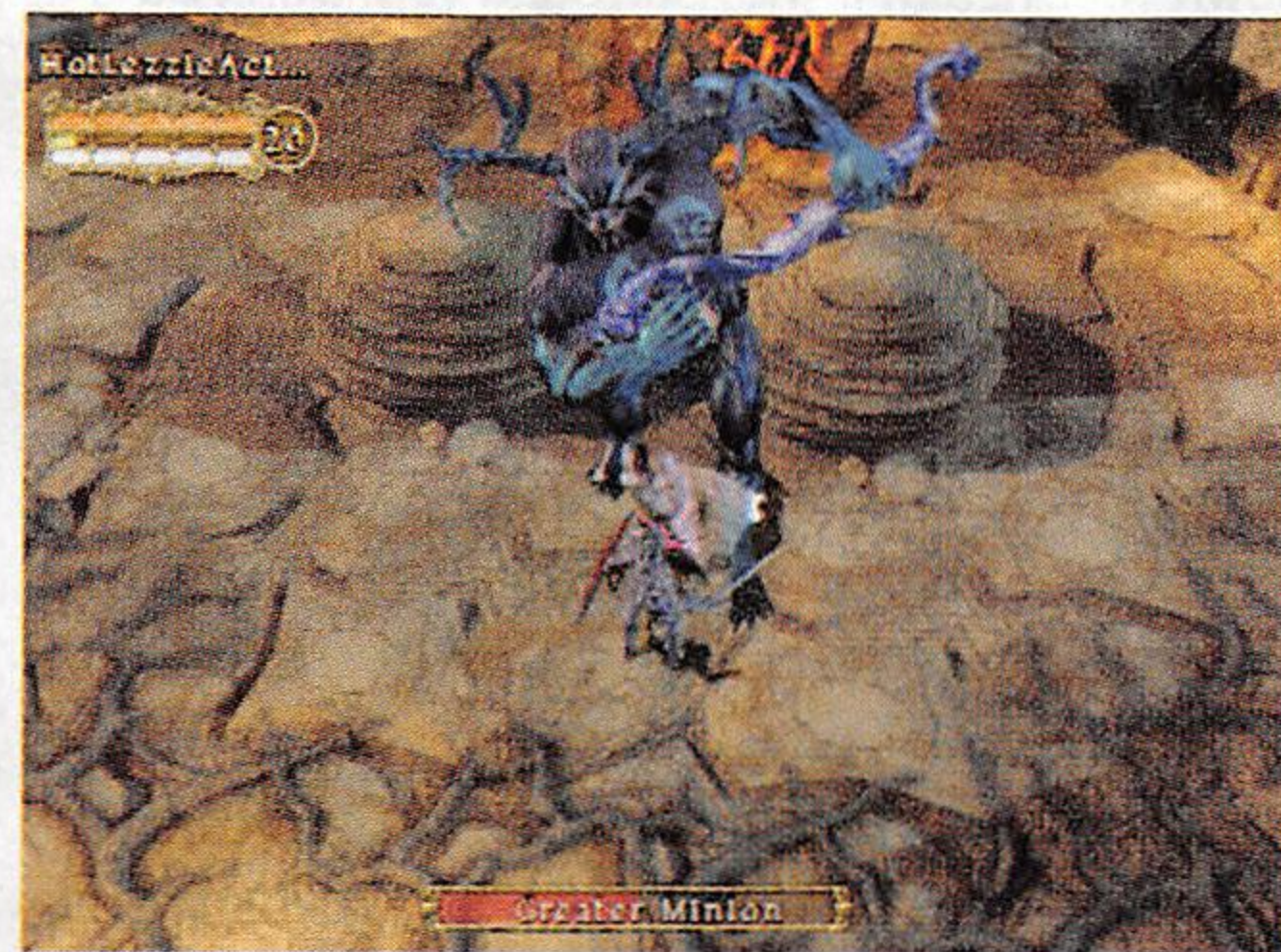


▲ The Arena Beast can be a handful if you can't find cover.

GREATER MINION

Up close, this fellow's tough — he'll actually slap you silly using someone's soul as a blackjack.

However, the block/attack/block strategy you developed for the Aqueous Kretch will work, as will just keeping your distance and making him into a pincushion. Ironically, he won't use his own arrows much.



▲ The Greater Minion can really bludgeon you silly up close, especially if you're a non-tank class.

INNORUUK

There are two rounds to this battle. Initially, you can't hurt Innoruuk, so don't waste time trying. Instead, kill the five giant black skulls (which are *not* damaged by arrows). You should run like crazy, avoiding his fireballs whenever possible, and swipe at the skulls when you can. You can also use the skulls for shelter.

Once that's done, check in with Innoruuk's captive, and follow her instructions to get the final battle rolling. The best bet here is still arrows. Create distance just like always by peeling him off against the broken seals or (even better) pets like the dark knight's skeleton. Sometimes, he'll drop his hammer, but you shouldn't drop your attack until he's dead, dead, dead. Incidentally, dying during an Innoruuk battle ends the game rather than returning you to the nearest checkpoint — bummer.

▼ We won't spoil the big boss' appearance for you, but take it from us: if you don't avoid these fireballs, you may end up looking as ugly as he does —and that's *ugly*!





GameShark Codes

Final Fantasy X2

(continued from last issue)

[M] Must Be On

94C497AC B5260F5C

Character 8: Level 99 With

Massive Experience

249B47E8 45AC5DAD

Character 9: Level 99 With

Massive Experience

24DB67E8 452C5F2D

Character 10: Level 99 With

Massive Experience

24DB64E8 45AC5FAD

Character 11: Level 99 With

Massive Experience

249B64E8 452C5F2D

Character 12: Level 99 With

Massive Experience

249B66E8 45AC5FAD

Character 13: Level 99 With

Massive Experience

24DB46E8 452C5F2D

Max Slot Quantity Codes: Max

Quantity All Accessory Slots

44523668 14B4470C

593CD3F9 CEA50100

Max Slot Quantity Codes: Max

Quantity All Item Slots

44511768 5434450C

593CD3F9 CEA50100

Prince of Persia: Sands Of Time

[M] Must Be On

94D0BDF8 36EE4424

Infinite: Health (Except Big Falls)

24D1B5F4 9D3CD7DD

24D1B4B4 BFBC43ED

Infinite: Health (Farah)

249013E8 B2B4D5A9

Infinite: Sand Tanks

249034C8 B0B4452D

Infinite: Slow Motion Time

249836A8 24B4534C

Infinite: Power Tanks

24D014CA 30B445AD

24D095CA 32B4536D

Sand Tank Quick Gain

24D030EC 92B553BD

Power Tanks Quick Gain

249033CC 9234532D

Dragonball-Z: Budokai 2

[M] Must Be On

9490B5E8 176E06BC

Infinite: Health P1

24D7D2A8 40B45D68

Infinite: KI P1

24D792A8 00A45578

Infinite: Health P2

249777A8 40B459E8

Infinite: KI P2

249737A8 00A451F8

Infinite: Money

24437A86 FEA1D89A

2491B3B4 BFBCC119

Unlock: All Characters

44501528 32B0D3D8

59B5493C 272991D8

Monster Rancher 4

[M] Must Be On

94D532A0 1ABEDF32

PSM Exclusive Codes

In-Battle: Ultra Easy Win

14D0B368 14704378

14D01568 147043A8

Have: Hoppy Owler Medal

04503028 1630E3EC

Monster: Never Tired

14901229 16B0C34C

Monster: Max: POW.

14001B38 9E30834E

Monster: Max: ACC.

14001B39 9E30834E

Monster: Max: INT.

14001B38 9E30836E

Monster: Max: SPD.

14001B39 9E30836E

Monster: Max: DEF.

14001B38 9E30835E

Monster: Max: LIF.

14001B39 9E30835E

Monster: Max: Total Earnings

24035886 DEA1CACE

Monster: Max: Fame

04801028 9EB0E34C

Monster: Max: Wins

14001029 1EB0C35E

14001028 1EB0C37E

Monster: Max: Star Points

04501228 1630C3FE

In-Battle: Monster:

Infinite Health

1400BB78 9C70113A

14003F78 9CF0030A

14003F79 9CF0030A

14003F78 9CF0031A

0400B368 1C7051BA

In-Battle: Infinite Time

249031C8 10F4537D

Breeder: Max: Gold

2404323E DFB9CF6E

Breeder: Max: Total Earnings Won

2444113E DF39CF5E

Breeder: Max: Wins

14401128 1E30C74E

Breeder: Max: Wins

14401129 1E30C74E

Breeder: Max: Togle Fame

14801228 9EB0C1EC

Breeder: Max: Ryuwn Fame

14801228 9EB0C1DC

Breeder: Max: Torble Fame

14801228 9EB0C1FC

Breeder: Max: Vizley Fame

14801028 9EB0C14C

I-Ninja

[M] Must Be On

9450B2E8 B3E61F72

Infinite: Health

24D2F368 24B4455C

24D2F368 24B4457C

Infinite: Coinage

2400B878 BC3405FE

Infinite: Continues

2400B978 BC34055E

Infinite: Ninja Stars

2400B878 BC3405DE

Infinite: Hi-Explosive Darts

2400BB78 BC34054E

Have: Massive Score

2403F9C6 FC254C4E

Have: Massive Kill Count

2400BB78 BC3405EE

Have: All Grades

2480B068 343445EC

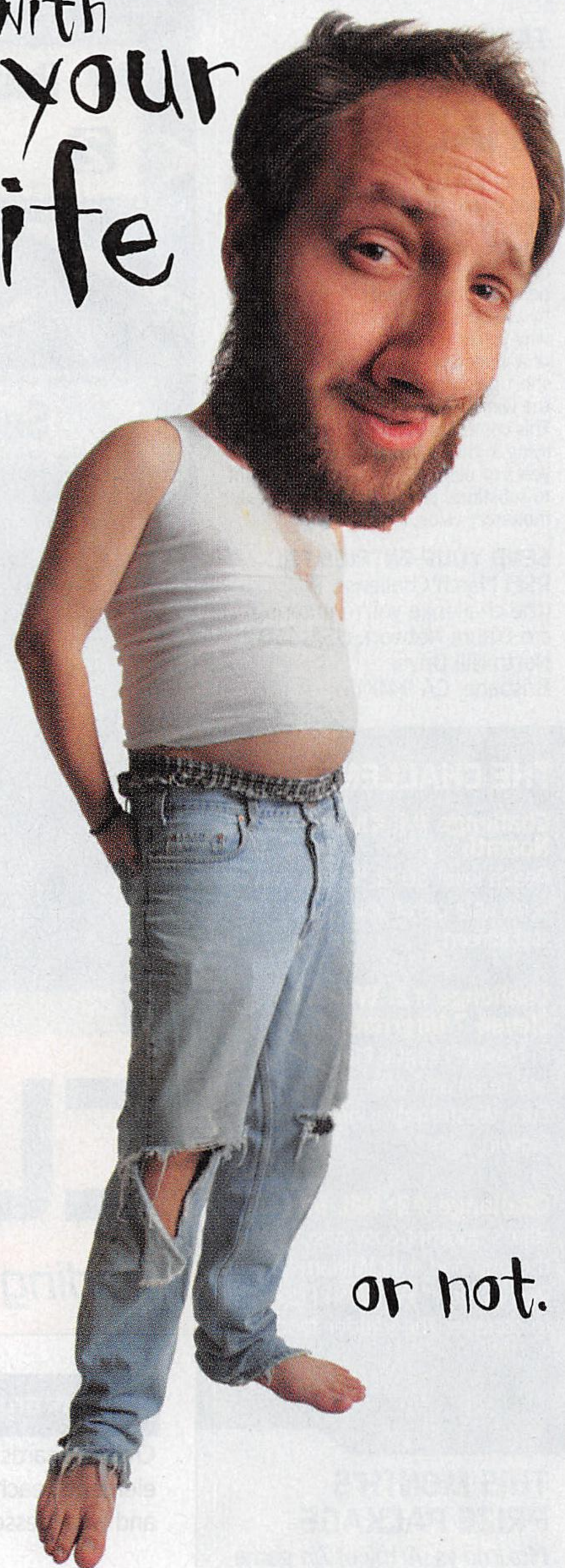
Unlock: All Rage Abilities

2411F368 343405CC

Always Have: All Rage Abilities

249AA3E8 7424457D

do something
with
your
life



or not.

> A **real** college degree, focused on advancing technology.

Available online or on-campus.

GAME DESIGN
VIDEO PRODUCTION
DIGITAL ANIMATION
NETWORK SECURITY
E-COMMERCE
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT
MULTIMEDIA
WEB DESIGN
DATABASE MANAGEMENT



Learn more.

www.uat.edu or 800.658.5744

TAKE THE PSM CHALLENGE!

RULES You can't send an entry for each challenge. If you cheat or use codes, you'll be disqualified. The final letter for the contest will be accepted on April 1st. If there are multiple winners, the final winner will be decided by the best paragraph that explains why you're the winner. Send a picture or a videotape (non-returnable) and a short paragraph explaining why you're the winner. Sorry, no e-mail entries! This contest is open only to readers living in the United States, age 18 years or older. PSM reserves the right to substitute prizes of equal or greater monetary value, if necessary.

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO:
PSM March Challenge #
(the challenge you're entering)
c/o Future Network USA, 150
North Hill Drive,
Brisbane, CA 94005.

THE CHALLENGES

Challenge #1: Champions Of Norrath

Reach level 50 or higher, and send us a pic of your character's stat screen.

Challenge #2: Winning Eleven 7 International

In Master League Mode, choose any team and conquer the Euro Western division. That's it! Simple, right?

Challenge #3: NFL Street

Here's another easy one. Unlock the one and only William "The Refrigerator" Perry, and use him to conquer the Ladder Mode.

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE PACKAGE

Maximo vs. Army of Zin game
Worms 3D game
The Suffering game
Warhammer 40K Fire Warrior figure



DECEMBER WINNERS

Karaoke Revolution

Thomas Lane, Twin Mountain, NH

SSX 3

Kevin Campbell, Kokomo, IN

ESPN NBA Basketball

Dimitri Udis, Brooklyn, NY



CULDCEPT

Trading card smackdown straight from the publisher!

▲ Always keep a couple "Holy Word" spells in your inventory so that you can dictate where you or the opponent will travel on the board.

Elementary Aggression

Creature cards can be divided into 5 elements, each with its own strengths and weaknesses:

Fire (red) – More offensive than defensive.

Water (blue) – Most defensive, but with lots of restrictions.

Air (yellow) – Most offensive, but cost more Gs to summon.

Earth (green) – More defensive than offensive.

Neutral (white) – great all-around cards, but you don't receive a territory bonus when placed.

A pinch of this, a spoonful of kick-ass

Try to combine a creature with an item that will enhance its natural capability even further. For example, use "Ceberus", which attacks twice per battle, with "Claymore", an item which boosts ST+50, on an invasion will net a ST of 140!

Stack the deck

Deck building is the most important aspect of Culdcept! It's best to keep a good balance between of all the card types so that you aren't stuck with all

items, all spells, or high level creatures with high prerequisites.

Pillage conquered territories

Earlier areas on the map can generate fights which will not cost you the game — in fact, you gain cards win or lose. Even better, you can actually leave the game, load your character up in "Versus" mode, and win cards that can be used back in story mode.

MAPBlast!

Save and review before playing specific maps. Examine the map, then exit out and modify your deck to take advantage of the map's terrain types.

Alchemist lab: The lab is devoid of natural terrain. Bring colorless monsters or stack your deck with magic generating cards.

Quanze: This map is fire and water heavy. Create a fire/water deck, or, if you have the cards, opt for a terrain changing deck and outmaneuver your foes.

Durhan: This map is all about movement cards. Bring plenty.

Temple 2: Use movement cards to force another character into the central area — it can be a game-ender.

The most challenging of the maps have teleporters, so it's best to go heavy on movement affecting cards.



◀ Some characters' elemental alignments are both their strongest strengths and greatest weaknesses.

Scouting Reports

Here's how to cut the toughest opponents down to size.

Ryvern: He gets tougher every time you meet. Go offensive against him by building decks with powerful creatures and good equipment.

Aldha: Go heavy on movement cards to both keep from getting stuck on the extra map and to send your foes

there instead.

Morroc: Uses only neutral monsters. Fight defensively, adding more than normal count of equipment cards and activation-based monsters.

Whirlwind, Gamygin and Mullyn: Each of these characters is element specific. Make a deck that counters their elements or that can dominate other terrains.

CODES

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Codes are entered in the Password section of the Options menu.

Donatello

Strong Donatello DRLDS
Durable Donatello SSSMR
Donatello's Alternate Costume DDSMS
Donatello Stronger Power-ups DMDRS

Leonardo

Strong Leonardo LMLSD
Durable Leonardo MRLLM
Leonardo's Alternate Costume MRLLM
Leonardo Stronger Power-ups LSLSR
Leonardo Endless Shuriken SMRDM

Michelangelo

Strong Michelangelo MSRMM
Durable Michelangelo MRRML
Michelangelo's Alternate Costume RRLMD
Michelangelo Stronger Power-ups MMSLR
Michelangelo Endless Explosive Shuriken and Stronger Recovery Items DRDSS

Raphael

Strong Raphael RDSRL
Durable Raphael LRMDL
Raphael's Alternate Costume DMDML
Raphael Stronger Power-ups SLDSM

Unlock Splinter in Story Mode MSRLS
Unlock Toy Data LSDRM
Unlock Alternate Sound Effects SMMRS

BATMAN: RISE OF SIN TZU

Codes are entered on the start screen. Hold down **△□○×** and enter the following:

Infinite Health **↑→↓←↑←↓→**
Infinite Combo **←→↑↓→←↓↑**

All Upgrades **↑↑←←→→↓↓**
Unlock Rewards **↓↑↓↑←→←→**
Unlock Dark Knight Difficulty **↓←→↑↑→←↓**

FUGITIVE HUNTER: WAR ON TERROR

Unlock Cheat Menu
At the Title Screen, press **⊙⊙⊙⊙⊙⊙⊙⊙⊙**. This will unlock the following cheats, which can be toggled on and off in the Special Features menu.
Invincible All Fugitives
Infinite Ammo All Weapons

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

The following cheat codes are entered in the options
Moon Gravity getitup
Perfect Manuals keepitsteady
Perfect Rail Balance letitslide
Unlock All Thug Movies digivid

The "Create-a-Skater" mode contains tons of hidden characters. Try entering the following names.

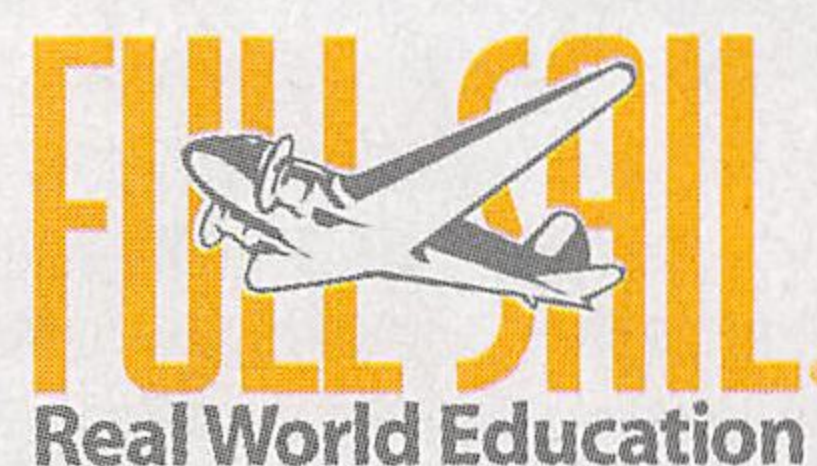
1337	Henry Ji
Akira2s	Jason Uyeda
Alan Flores	Jeremy Andersen
Alex Garcia	Joel Jewett
Andy Marchel	Johnny Ow
arr	leedsleedsleeds
Bailey	M'YAK
Big Tex	MARCOS XK8R
buffoon	Mike Ward
Chauwa Steel	moreuberthaned
Chris Rausch	NSJEFF
ChrisP	Noly
CodePirate	POOPER
crom	sik
DDT	Skillzombie
Daddy Mac	Stacey D
Dan Nelson	Steal2Liv
Dave Stohl	tao zheng
deadendroad	THEDOC
fatass	TOPBLOKE
FROGHAM	TSUEnami!
GEIGER	The Kraken
GMIAB	The Swink
Glycerin	Todd Wahoske
Greenie	WOODCHUCK
grjost	Y2KJ
Guilt Ladle	Yawgurt
Hammer	ZiG



Full Sail's Visualization Center is one of over 60 studios, production suites and computer labs located on campus.



HOMEWORK.



school of

▶ Computer Animation
▶ Digital Media
Film
▶ Game Design & Development
Recording Arts
Show Production & Touring

If you're passionate about pursuing a career in Game Design & Development, **Full Sail is the place to start.**

To find out why:
800.226.7625
fullsail.com

YOU CAN GET THERE FROM > **HERE**

3300 University Boulevard • Winter Park, FL 32792

Financial aid available to those who qualify • Job placement assistance • Accredited College, ACCSCT

© 2003 Full Sail, Inc. All rights reserved. The terms "Full Sail," "You Can Get There From Here," "Full Sail Real World Education," and the Full Sail logo are either registered service marks or service marks of Full Sail, Inc.



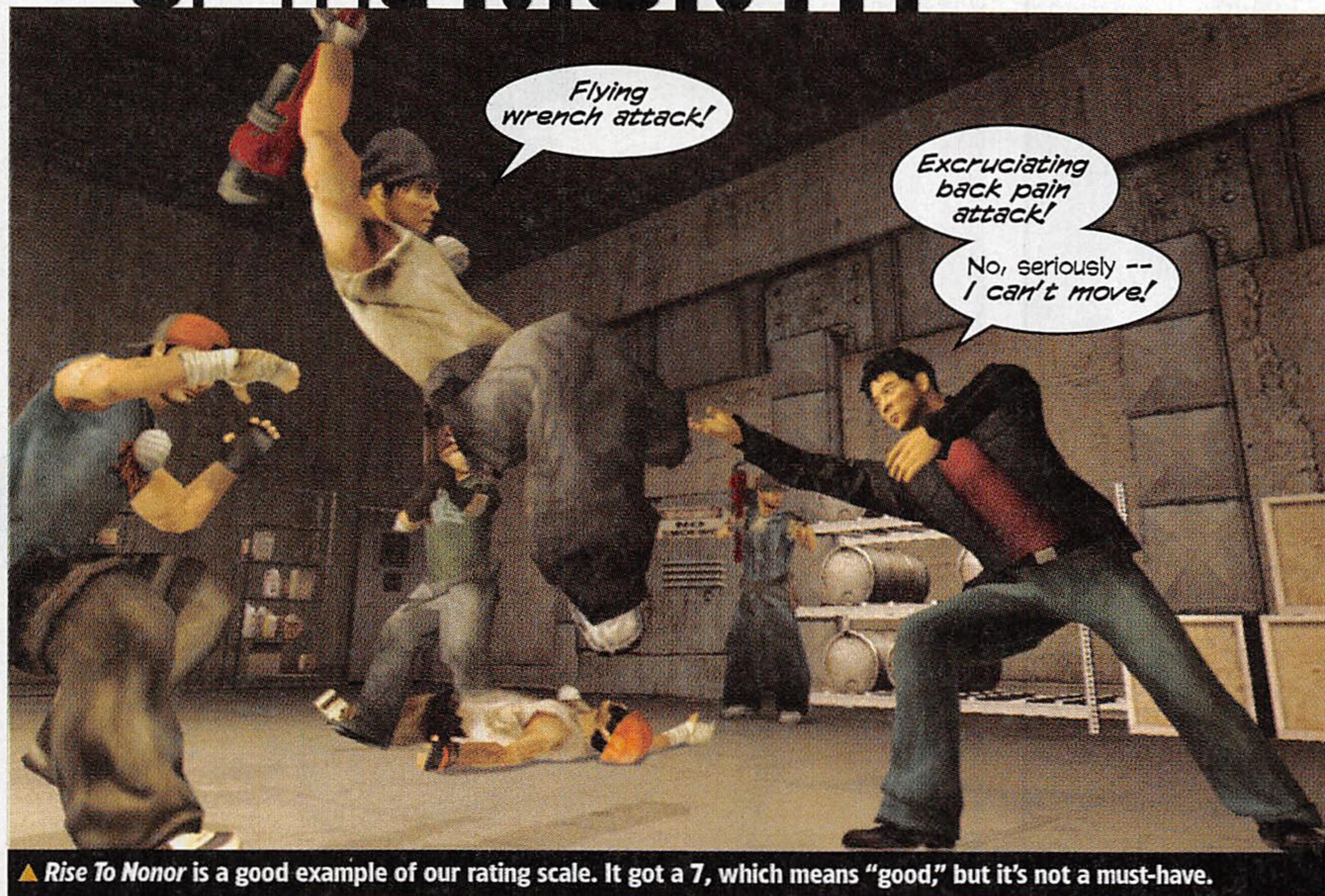
PSM Letters
c/o Future Network USA

150 North Hill Drive
Brisbane, CA, 94005 USA



E-mail:
psm@futurenetworkusa.com.

LETTER OF THE MONTH



▲ *Rise to Honor* is a good example of our rating scale. It got a 7, which means "good," but it's not a must-have.

RANDY'S TIP OF THE MONTH:

"Summer will be here before you know it, so here are a couple of tips to help you out at the beach. First of all, you don't need to worry about a swimsuit. As we all know, if you jump into the water wearing your clothes, they'll be dry when you get out. Also, be sure to keep an eye out for glowing patches on the sand — that means there is buried treasure underneath! Be careful, though, because some of the chests are rigged with traps."

I'm starting to notice a disturbing trend. First, we had full-page reviews of new games. Then we had 2 reviews per page, and later 3. But now, we are getting 6 reviews (or blurbs, as I call them) on a single page! How about beefing up the reviews and cutting down on the hyped-up previews? The previews are ridiculous, anyway — you guys always praise a game and a few weeks later, you give the game a 6/10. Huh? I feel your advertisers are pushing for positive previews since they fear the review will be less than enthusiastic.

Second, your reviews are getting WAY too soft. Almost everything is scoring at 6+. Where are all the 3's and 4's you used to throw about with reckless abandon? And don't tell me that all the games debuting are fantastic... most of my PSone games were more fun than a lot of the garbage coming out today.

Jason Skudlarek, jskudlarek@earthlink.net

ERIC Thanks, Jason, I love honest criticism. Now, let's get to your concerns. I don't like the six reviews per page templates, either. However, there are times when we simply have far more games to review than we have pages on which to review them. We sometimes have to squeeze six games onto a page instead of two or three.

Finally, about our scores being too high lately — think of our rating scale the same as a standard grading system in school: 10 and 9 are "A"s, 8 is a "B", 7 a "C", 6 a "D", and 5 or anything below it an "F". Regardless of that, I know we've been giving out a lot of passing grades lately, but that's because there simply aren't as many junk games as there used to be.



▲ The "Great Slatini" amazes the PSM staff with his astounding psychic powers.

No Rising Fun?

I'm a big fan of the *Medal of Honor* games, but what happened to *Rising Sun*? They had so much potential to work with. The hit points on the bodies are really bad. I had my sniper rifle aimed right at a guy's head, shot and totally missed. Why even have a sniper rifle if you can't hit your target or one of your squad members just runs out screaming "DIE YOU S.O.B!". That kind of ruins the covert missions. The graphics are no big step up, either, and it's kind of bad when you can see half a tree inside a building. I'm getting sick of games that make it big and then the developers just throw something together for the second installment.

Skaler, Sk8rPimp49@aol.com

STEVE Yeah, it's unfortunate that *Rising Sun* didn't quite deliver on all of its potential. I still think it's a fun game, but the development team definitely made a few mistakes. Hopefully, though, the team will learn from their mistakes and make the sequel (which follows the other brother) much better. They are definitely going to have to step up, because competition (in the form of Activision's *Call of Duty*) is just around the corner. Having played the PC version of *CoD*, I can honestly say that *MOH* is going to be in for one major battle.

TalkBACK

EACH MONTH we post a new question on our website at psmonline.com, and print the best answers here in our Letters section. Give PSM a piece of your mind!

This Month's Question: "What's your all-time favorite moment in a PS2 game, and why?" **POTENTIAL SPOILERS!**

The ending of *FFX* when Yuna tries to hug Tidus from behind, but ends up running through him instead. It was sad, because she couldn't hug the one that she loved.

Alex Wong, Penfield, NY

OK, this is simple... when Snoop Dog made an appearance in *FFX*. :-)

Joe Wesolowski, Attica, NY

When I beat my friend in battle mode in *Crash Team Racing*, with a rolling bomb from across the level.

Sean McLaughlin, Pacifica, CA

The whole game of *FFX*, because I could relate to how some of the characters felt and acted.

Jade Breed, Castor, AB

When Raiden died. Oh wait, that didn't happen. Damn it!

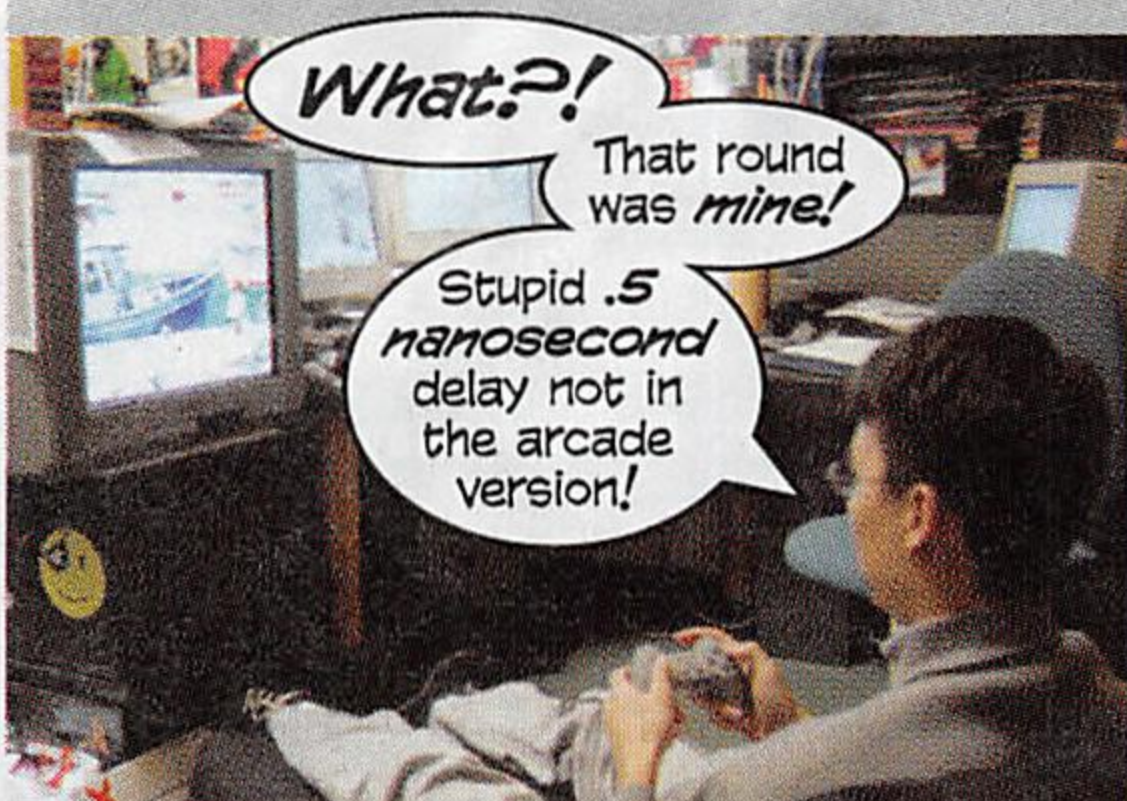
Dallas Taylor, Overland Park, KS

My favorite all-time PS2 moment is in *Silent Hill 3* when Heather and Douglas are driving to Silent Hill and you learn who Heather really is. That scene rules!!!!

Tom Hazelton, NS

DOWNTIME

Hey, only 99% of our time is spent on playing games! We do other stuff, too!



▲ Steve says he's a bit of a *Street Fighter* purist. This is why we say he's a little too much of one.



▲ Sometimes (well, most of the time) we don't consider the ramifications of our office dares.



▲ Eric later regretted asking Bill to "come up with a new idea for next issue's reviews section."



▲ Eric just knew that all his Chocobo riding was going to come back to bite him sooner or later.

<< MOST OF MY PSONE GAMES WERE MORE FUN THAN A LOT OF THE GARBAGE COMING OUT TODAY >>

Ripping On Randy

I have a question about a particular observation made by Randy Nelson. In his review of *Need For Speed Underground*, he said, "the game doesn't convey the same sense of speed as *Midnight Club 2*, which is a shame." I don't disagree with this statement if you play the entire game from the chase cams, in which case there isn't a sense of speed at all. However, if the game is played from the bumper cam, the sense of speed is probably the best in any game so far; *MC2* withstanding. It seems to me the visual technicians designed the game to be played from this viewing angle. I was just curious if Mr. Nelson would have scored the game differently if he played the game from the bumper mounted camera perspective. I realize this letter is based on the assumption that he used only the chase cams; but the human interpretation of speed is universal. I don't believe that he would have made that statement if the game was played from the proper viewpoint.

Racer, Toname@aol.com

RANDY I always play racing games from the bumper or in-car perspective, but I always spend an even amount of time playing in all views when reviewing one. I thought the sense of speed in *NFSU*'s drag racing segments was really good, but just wasn't that convincing anywhere else, even in faster cars, hence my review comments.

She's Seeing Things

Maybe I'm the only one, but a little while ago I was playing *Primal*. This game is in-freaking-credible! The controls, camera, and puzzles are beyond most action/puzzle games. But I'm writing this because, after gaining Jen's third demon form, she smashes a tombstone. At first I didn't believe what I saw! The tombstone read; "R.I.P.: Laura Croft 2003 " AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO SEES THIS? Does this mean what I think it means? Is *Primal* the new flagship game of the puzzle-solving genre? Or can we expect a hot Jen vs. Lara cross over? Anyway, I just thought I'd point this out and bring this awesome game some higher attention.

Bunny, PsychoRabbit1@aol.com

ERIC Wow. I agree that *Primal* is highly underrated, but I have to admit that I didn't

notice that writing on the tombstone.

Perhaps it's a bit of competitive ribbing between Sony's Cambridge Studios and fellow Brits (and former *Tomb Raider* developer) Core. Or maybe someone at Cambridge could predict the future. Either way, I wouldn't read too much into it. I'd definitely say *Primal* turned out better than Lara's last outing, but because Eidos is platform agnostic and Jen's a PS2-only girl, I wouldn't expect her and Lara to meet anytime soon.

Dirty Dancing

Am I the only one who doesn't get this whole *Dance Revolution* thing? I'm an old school gamer who remembers waiting in line at arcades to rip my opponent's head off. Now when I go to an arcade, I see skaters waiting to dance against their opponents, and I am baffled. Are we reverting back to the '70s love era and away from the '90's violence? And worse yet, am I going to start seeing gangs battling it out on the dance pad, because I don't know if I could live in a future like that.

Keith Stamos, keithstamos@hotmail.com

STEVE Ha, ha... that's a good one. Having watched the *Dance Dance Revolution* grow and grow, and being a part of it, I can say that *DDR* has become the new *Street Fighter* of this decade. It's a series that requires a certain amount of skill to be good at, but its simplistic nature has allowed even non-gamers to enjoy it. I certainly think that's a good thing. Actually, anything that draws people back into the arcades is a good thing. I miss those classic days of hanging out with the friends and competing on all the new games at the local mini-golf center. And, if *DDR* can bring that back — even by a little bit — then I'm completely for it. Let's just hope that Konami can introduce some even cooler music games in the near future, as *DDR* interest isn't going to last forever. Until then, though, just enjoy the music and hope that gang members all drop their weapons in favor of a little dancing.

▼ *Primal*'s developers might have seemed cocky by taking stabs at Lara, but their game (and CG character model) turned out a lot better than the last *Tomb Raider*...



GAMES WE WANT TO SEE

WWX: RUMBLE POSE
This add-on for Konami's upcoming all-girl wrestling game *WWX: Rumble Rose* would bring a whole new level of competition to the game. Instead of battling it out in the ring, players would first try to dress their character as provocatively as possible, then strut out on stage and attempt to create the ultimate sexy pose. There would be various competitions, including evening dress, swimsuit, and, for the ultimate challenge, dancing. Of course, it would be possible to interfere with rivals during the pose-off, making them look like a clutz.

Ratchet and Clank... the feeling of finding those platinum bolts is so delicious. I have many PS2 moments... I could write a novel.

Brandon King, Bahrain, AE

It's gotta be the *.hack* series and the many revealing moments clearing up the puzzle about "The World."

Emily Gooze, Utica, NY

I think the best moment is when it's new, and you open it, and this new game smell comes out, and you feel so good!

Carlos Orengo, San Juan, PR

The day I saw that I completed everything in *GTA Vice City*. The new clothes the game gave me made it all worth it.

Gino Fragoso, Azusa, CA

Watching the end of *Kingdom Hearts*. It touched me so much.

Bob Henderson, Boston, MA

My favorite moment is in *MGS2*, where Ocelot shoots Fortune. This is cool because she thought that she couldn't be killed, and then she was just killed just like that.

Chris Stahl, Quitman, GA

When the credits for *Metal Gear Solid 2* ended. I could finally go to the bathroom with out worrying I would miss something.

Peter Barbot, El Cajon, CA

When I first played *The Bouncer*... wait, we are talking about all time worst PS2 moments, right?

Xavier Burgin, Birmingham, AL

HARDCORE

Not So Final Fantastic

The reason I am writing this letter is to express my disappointment with Square Enix, and *Final Fantasy X-2*. Let me start with the all female cast. Sure, they are good to look at, but I want more than just three characters in the game. There should be at least a couple more awesome characters, like Cloud or even Auron, I would even have been happy if Tidus was playable, but no, we get three chick characters instead. The next thing that disappoints me is the lack of Aeons. That's one of the reasons I play *Final Fantasy*, to see the new summons in each installment. The disappointment does not end there, either. Why did they get rid of the world map? I would much rather run on the *Final Fantasy* world exploring all the land than point to a destination and click. Am I the only one who feels this way?

Steve, SK8NSTEVE@aol.com

ERIC Sorry *FF X-2* wasn't to your taste. Personally, I enjoy it, but I also think you have some valid criticisms. Still, there are also folks who would argue that the *FF* games tend to have more characters than one needs, that the costume changes are a worthy replacement for the summons, and that trotting around a world map is a waste of time. It's really just a matter of taste, I think. On the plus side, I'd like to give Square Enix credit for trying something new and different, as well as for bringing back some lovable cast members. Still, I'm guessing that the retina-searingly gorgeous *FFXII* will return to a more typical *FF* form.

Blast From The Past

Action games are all the same: bullet time, big guns, huge explosions and a mediocre story. This is fine, but wouldn't you love to see something different? How about a fat cop that eats donuts for health and drinks coffee for a limited caffeine rush? He'd use the standard 9mm pistol and

The first time I was attacked on *Cabella's Dangerous Hunts* was awesome. It freaked me out a little, though...

Zach Carman, New Garden, OH

Any moment in *Fatal Frame 2: Crimson Butterfly!* Any scene in there is brilliant and the story is fantastic!

Griffen Holt, Weatherford, TX

Mine would be the epic scene in *Final Fantasy VII* when Aeris is tragically killed after eating Pop Rocks and drinking Pepsi. That part really gave me my zeal for *Final Fantasy* games.

Jordan R., AZ

Mine was when I first got a PS2!

Kyle Kleyweg, Chicago, IL

My favorite moment is in *FFX* when Tidus and the gang crash Seymour's wedding. Sliding and jumping from rope to rope makes me wanna do it!

John Harris, Schenectady, NY

When I sold *Dark Cloud* and bought a Hot Wheels car with the two dollars I got for it.

Curt Jolley, Kelowna, BC

My favorite moment was storming the beach in *MOH Frontline*. The exploding bombs and intense gunfire were incredible!!!

Rick Neiman, Belleville, NJ

In *Ratchet & Clank 2*, my Gravity Bomb upgraded to mini-nuke. The explosions were bigger and made a mushroom cloud.

Josh Alvarado, San Diego, CA

ASK THE 800-LB. GORILLA

Sometimes you just have to grin and bear it!

Me and my bladder have a problem. Every time something important happens in a game (like an important, un-pausable movie), my bladder becomes weak and I have to either miss the plot-solving ending, or sit through it 'till I have tears in my eyes. Is this just me or is this a strange phenomenon that affects most or all gamers? If this is some strange phenomenon unrecorded in scientific studies, could it be some bladder weakening extra-terrestrial beam emitted from certain games? Me and my bladder need answers!

Nick Blond, ferrelfuzion89@hotmail.com

BILL I'm glad you asked this question, Nick, since it will not only allow me to pass on vital information, but also make a few bucks in much-needed beer money. While it is unknown as to whether GFBS (Gamer's Full

Bladder Syndrome) is a natural phenomenon or is indeed caused by aliens from the desert world of Parcho, I can offer you a solution (please excuse the pun...). I've invented a safety garment called Defends, the first adult diaper for gamers! Defends may resemble a large, green, plastic trash bag with some toilet paper wadded up in the bottom, but they are so much more! Simply slip the Defends around your body and secure the jaunty red ties in a festive bow at your neck. Voila! You are now ready for days of bathroom-free gaming! Just remember to remove the Defends before you touch any major electrical devices, though...

Have a question that requires a thoughtful, adult answer? Send an e-mail to bdonohue@futurenetworkusa.com, with "800-LB. Gorilla" in the Subject Line.

nightstick, and have a flashlight that you'd have to get batteries for.

Maybe it's just me, but I don't understand why today's action heroes need all this extra power, big automatic guns, and lots of health just to get past one stage. I can still remember when this one little Italian guy could jump over lava pits, kill a dragon, and save the princess without any of that Bullet Time malarkey. Ah, the good ol' days...

Nate Bond, nateinapp3@hotmail.com

CHRIS I like *Mario* games, too, but I'm sorry, Nate, your "fat cop" game is a stinker. Maybe if he ate his donuts in super slo-mo Bullet Time... Hey, yeah — you could call it "Donut Time", and every time he ate one, some random nearby item would explode. Now that I think of it, you've got a winner there, pal!

Getting The Goat

I am a big fan of the *Tony Hawk* series of games, and don't get me wrong when I say this, but I think the employees at Neversoft have some sick minds. I just recently was exploring the Tampa level in *Tony Hawk's Underground* when, behind the strip club, I saw a cop looking up a goat. This is when I started remembering things from a

previous *Tony Hawk* game. So I put *Tony Hawk 4* in and, sure enough, in the carnival level behind a game booth, a carnie was looking up another goat. So is this just a cruel joke of Neversoft's or are they into this kind of thing over there?

Chris Kessler, ElementRider1990@aol.com

RANDY Looking up? We've seen the cop with the goat, but at least in our copy of the game, he's not looking up at it. Maybe you've uncovered some weird glitch, or, more likely, the goat ate the cop's billy club he's "looking up" inside it to find it? I guess that would make it a billy goat then, huh?

A Hard Answer To Swallow

This may be an easy question to answer, but if I go out and buy a Hard Disk Drive (when it comes out), will I be able to put it in my PS2 and operate it without having to rummage together the extra dough to get an additional network adaptor?

Jason Whitworth, jccodes2002@yahoo.com

STEVE The official Sony hard drive, or HDD, only works with a Network Adaptor. That's what it is designed for. So, if you don't have one of those, you'll need to get one.

Pop Quiz

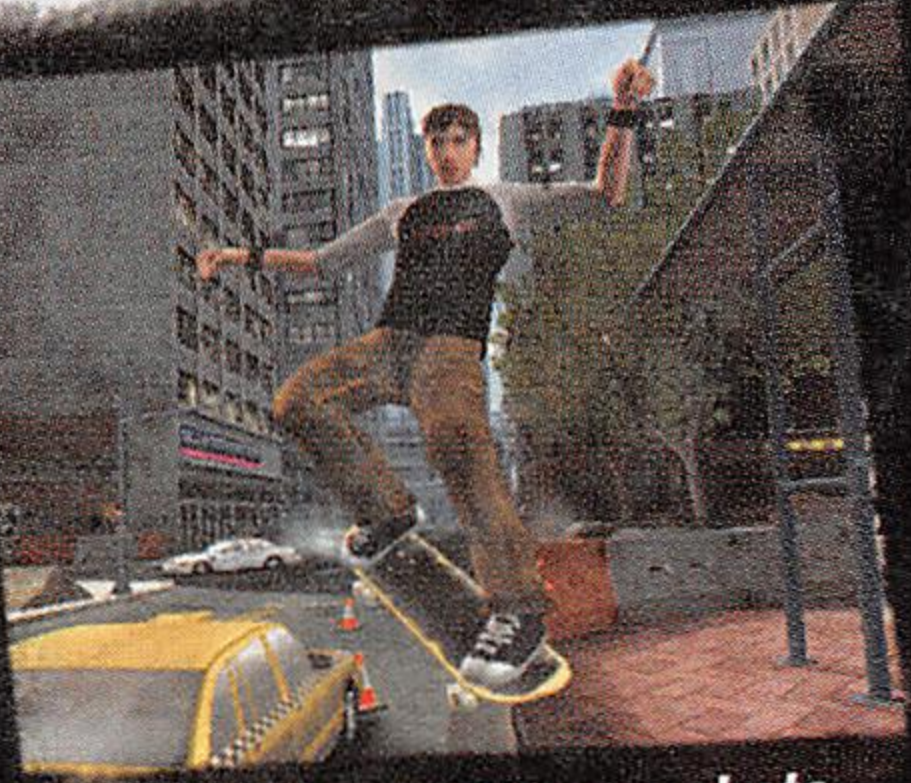
Think you know your stuff, hotshot? Then put it to the test. Unlike last month, this issue's quiz is the real deal, so get ready to give your gamer's brain a real workout.

THE CONTRA LEGACY
Arrange Konami's classic *Contra* shooters in the proper order of their release.

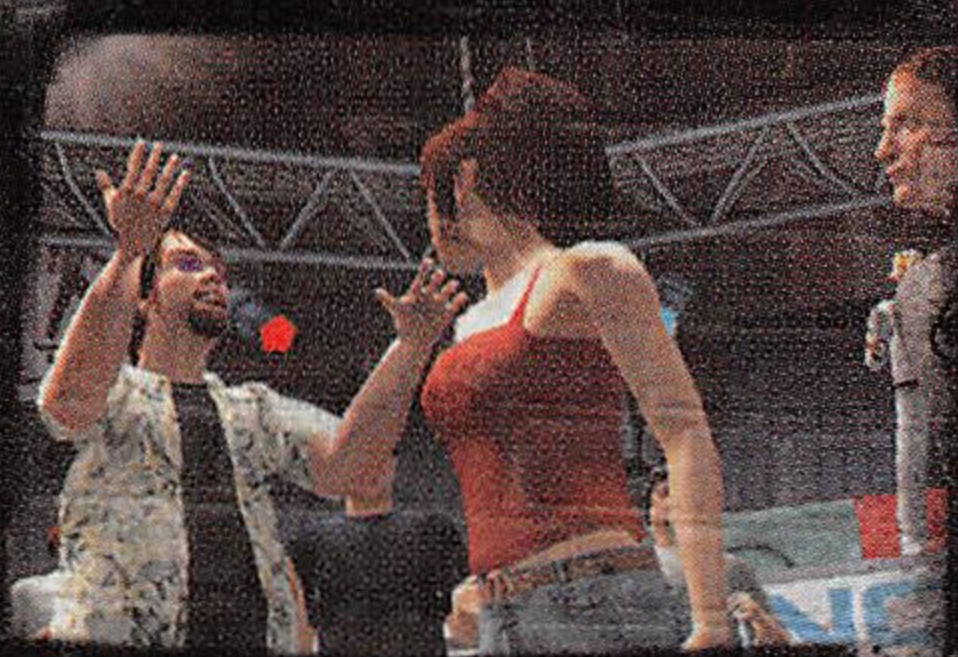
1. Contra
2. Contra: Shattered Soldier
3. Contra Hard Corps
4. Super Contra
5. Contra III: The Alien Wars
6. C: The Contra Adventure
7. Contra Advance: The Alien Wars
8. Contra: Legacy of War

ANSWERS: 1, 4, 5, 3, 8, 6, 2, 7

"10 OUT OF 10" -GMR



THUG™ stars YOU as a skate punk out to make it big.



Star in all of the Story Mode movies alongside the pros.



Do whatever it takes – run, climb, and of course, skate – to make it to the top.



Put your face in the game to skate as YOU.*

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

"5 out of 5"

– Maxim Magazine

"...one of the best games of the year."

– GameSpy

"Driving! Climbing! Building! Running! Skating will NEVER be the same again!"

– Official PlayStation 2 Magazine [U.K.]



NOW AVAILABLE
THUGONLINE.COM



PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE



Blood
Mild Violence
Strong Language
Suggestive Themes

Game Experience May
Change During Online Play.

© 2003 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and THUG is a trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Tony Hawk is a trademark of Tony Hawk. PlayStation 2, GameCube and Xbox versions developed by Neversoft Entertainment, Inc. Game Boy Advance version developed by Vicarious Visions. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. TM, © Game Boy Advance and Nintendo GameCube are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners. Maxim Magazine © Dennis Publishing, Inc.

*Face mapping technology is exclusive to PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system and requires online connectivity.



ACTIVISION

PSM FAN ART

Every month we take a look at the coolest PlayStation 2 fan art from the hottest new talents. If you'd like to see your illustration printed here, send us a copy! (We'll take originals too, but we can't return them.) Address it to **PSM Fan Art, c/o Future Network USA, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005**. Or, even better, e-mail a hi-res version of the piece to us at psm@futurenetworkusa.com. Be sure to label the subject heading "Fan Art." Now get busy! :-)



BIG
the
PIC

"Cheese!"
by Sergio Curiel

▲ As the artist himself put it to us, "I wanted to submit this fan art of Jill and the Nemesis because I don't think anyone has ever seen Nemesis smile." Aw, Sergio, it's sweet that you even care about the bad guys' happiness. What about the rest of you PSM readers? We dare you to illustrate your favorite PlayStation 2 baddie in a way that we'd never expect.



▲ Leon Belmont wipes out hundreds of the undead when one of the zombies mistakes him for an 18 year-old girl. (Finely illustrated by JASON GRIMES.



▲ Spawn reacts to hearing that, even though he's dead, he still has to stick to his marital vows. (Big thanks goes out to KEITH PRENTICE for such a fine pic!)



▲ This cute, super-deformed catfight action brought to you by MANIAC.



▲ Akuma gets his "Hadoken" on, courtesy of fan artist JAMIE TUE.



▲ We've never seen Final Fantasy X's Tidus quite like this. Thanks, K.O.

My favorite part actually happened in all the games, when my PS2 would freeze up for no reason during the last battle.

Wrae Ann, Grand Junction, CO

When I beat Ares in *Armored Core 2*. I mean, what's better than kicking some robot ass?

Armando Muñoz, Vega Alta, PR

In *SOCOM II*, at the end of Terminal Transaction, when you blow down the wall for extraction with C-4.

Larry Coplus, Corpus Christi, TX

At the end of *GTA 3* when Maria is yapping too much, so the main character guy shoots her.

Cory LaBreck, Wethersfield, CT

My all time PS2 game moment is in *Manhunt*, in the prison where you finally get to kill that freakin' rabbit. I really hated that rabbit.

Ian Hall, Dallas, TX

Trying to stay awake to see the next great level in *Tomb Raider 1*.

Dale C., Kings Mtn., NC

My favorite moment would have to be in *FFX*, when Tidus & Yuna had that awesome kiss underwater.

Patrick Moran, Ann Arbor, MI

When I got 89 straight wins on *Tekken 4* at the arcade. My record has been there for almost a year. YAH!!

James M. Weslow, Las Vegas, NV

Buying a Video Game?

Play the game
that's right
for you!

You can give Tiger Woods a tennis racket, but he knows that golf is the game that's right for him. So how does Tiger know which computer and video games are OK to play? He checks the rating on every game box...And so should you!

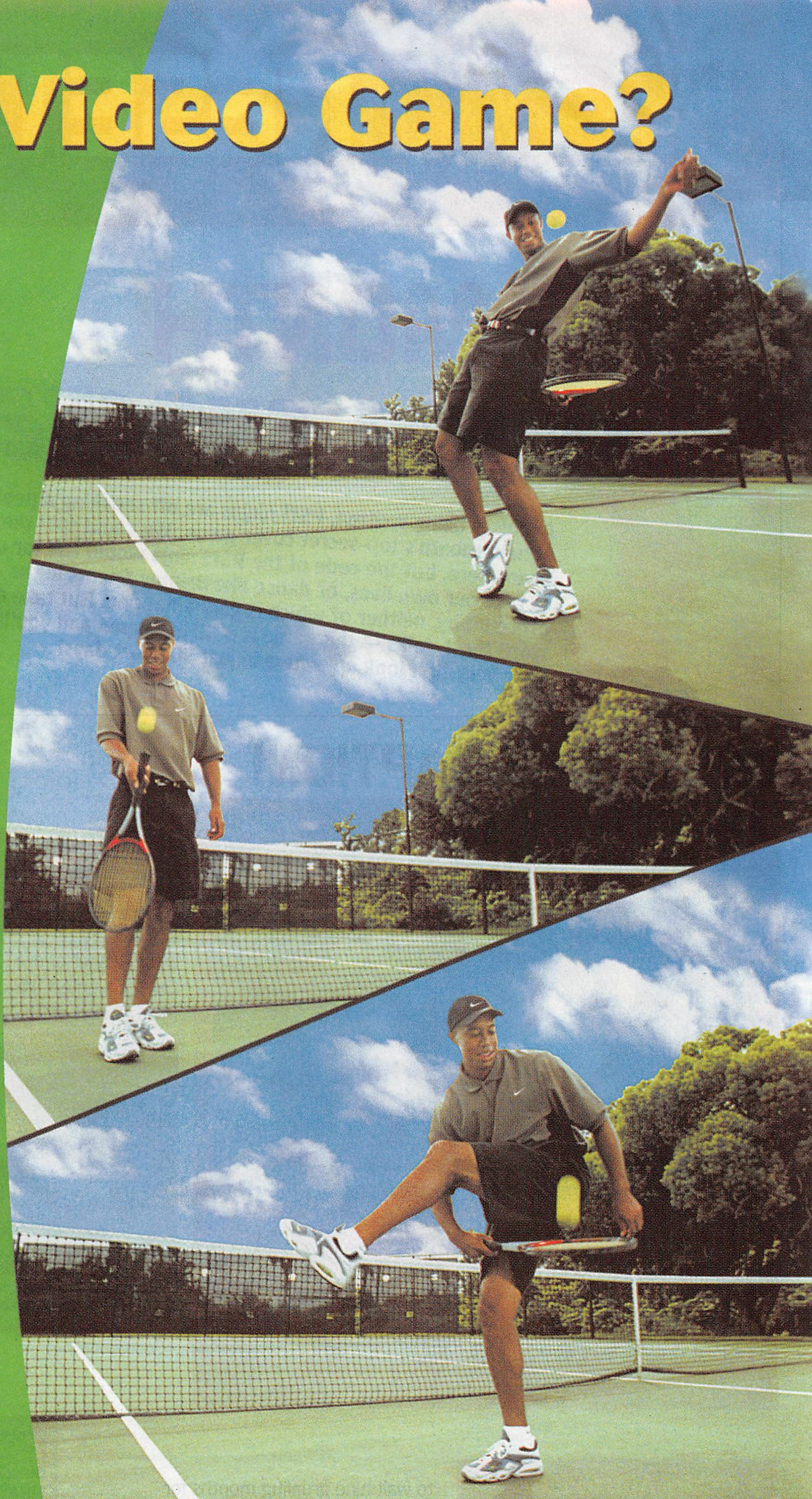
Computer and video game ratings have two parts: **rating symbols**, which tell you what age group the game is appropriate for and **content descriptors**, which tell you about specific content elements that may be of interest or concern.

So the next time you're choosing a game, check the rating and the content descriptors. And like Tiger Woods, play the game that's right for you.

ESRB

ENTERTAINMENT
SOFTWARE
RATING BOARD

www.esrb.org



CHECK THE RATINGS ON EVERY VIDEO GAME BOX



ON FRONT



ON BACK



NEXT MONTH SEQUEL SHOCKER

As this is being written, PSM ninjas are off sneaking a peek at next month's top-secret cover game. We could spill the beans here, but the code of the PSM ninja would call for us to take our own lives, or dance like Britney Spears in the office lobby, neither of which is gonna happen. But take our word for it, folks — this game is a **HUGE** sequel and you'll get your very first look *anywhere* in just 30 short days!

WRITE THIS CAPTION!



▲ **WRITE A FUNNY CAPTION FOR THIS PICTURE!**

Jot down a funny caption for the above screen, and if we like yours the best, we'll send you a PSM Prize Pack filled with cool PlayStation 2 goodies! Just send an e-mail with your entry to psm@futurenetworkusa.com, with the subject header "PSM Caption #82" (or send your entry to **PSM Caption #82, c/o Future Network USA, Brisbane, CA 94005**). Be sure to include your full name and address so we can contact you if you win!

3 YEARS AGO IN PSM...

March, 2001 • Issue #43
Final Fantasy hits PS2

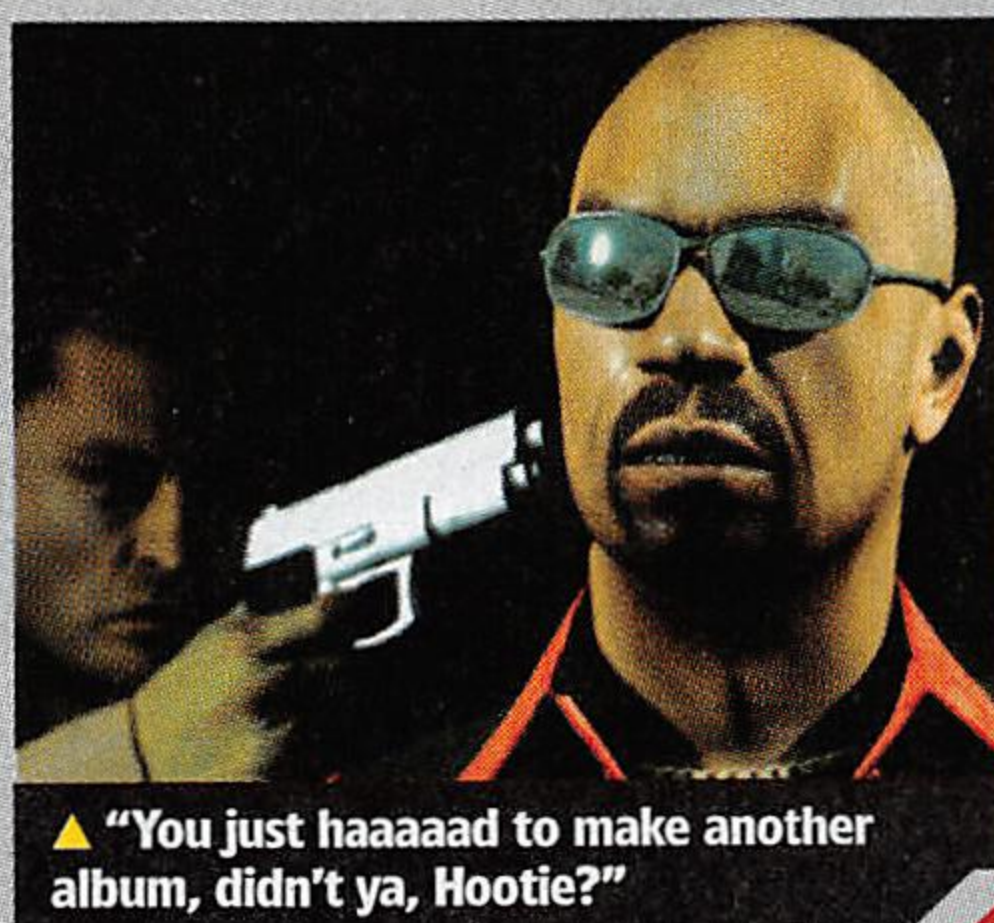
Three years ago this month, Square's legendary *Final Fantasy* series was (at long last) announced for PS2, and RPG fans nationwide failed their savings throws against fluid leakage. They instantly fell in love with Tidus, Yuna and the whole nutty *FFX* gang, but then had

to wait nine grueling months for Square to release the game in our corner of the world. Filthy teasers.

The first *Onimusha* earned our "Must Buy: Bronze" award and Game of the Month honors, while *The Bouncer* — in our estimation the biggest disappointment ever in the history of everything — checked in at just four notches above a zero. Our *Devil May Cry* preview restored our faith in action games, though.

AND THE WINNER IS...

MIKE NOVELLI of Glen Allen, VA is the winner of our December Caption Contest. Mike, your PSM Prize Pack is on the way!



▲ "You just haaaaad to make another album, didn't ya, Hootie?"



▲ Here's some PSM trivia for ya: that blue box is there because *Tidus* doesn't have an arm!

EDITORIAL STAFF

Chris Slate Editor-in-Chief
Bill Donohue Managing Editor
Stephen Frost Senior Editor
Randy Nelson Editor
Eric Bratcher Associate Editor
Dan Fitzpatrick Art Director
Gary Liew Associate Art Director
Editorial Contributors Jeremy Dunham, Andy Eddy, Francesca Reyes, Doug Trueman, Chris Hudak, Kaiser Hwang, David Hodgson, Tyrone Rodriguez

PRODUCTION STAFF

Richard Lesovoy Production Director
Glenn Sadin Production Coordinator

CIRCULATION STAFF

Kate Bailey Group Circulation Director
Amy Leder Subscription Director
Mimi Hall Newsstand Director
Katie Cole Marketing Manager
Janet Amistoso Direct Marketing Specialist

ADVERTISING STAFF

Andy Swanson Publisher
aswanson@futurenetworkusa.com

Eric Merkow Consumer Sales Director
emerkow@futurenetworkusa.com (212) 768-2966
Anika Cunningham Mgr. Consumer Sales & Marketing
acunningham@futurenetworkusa.com (310) 546-5508
Stacy Bremmer Southwest Sales Manager
sbremmer@futurenetworkusa.com (562) 983-8078
Michelle Paredes Southwest Account Executive
mparedes@futurenetworkusa.com (415) 656-8534
Michelle Torrey Bay Area Sales Manager
mtorrey@futurenetworkusa.com (415) 656-8533
Shawna Rogers Bay Area Account Executive
srogers@futurenetworkusa.com (415) 656-8558
Dru Montgomery East Coast/NW Sales Manager
dmontgomery@futurenetworkusa.com (415) 656-8405
Holly Neal East Coast/NW Account Executive
hneal@futurenetworkusa.com (212) 768-2966
Daphne Soriano Consumers Sales Manager West
dsoriano@futurenetworkusa.com (562) 983-8084
Carrie Michaelson Ad Services Manager
cmichaelson@futurenetworkusa.com (415) 656-8422

PSM Customer Care
P.O. Box 5154

Harlan, Iowa 51593-0654
1-800-477-0484

For Subscription Problems Only!
psmcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com
<http://service.futurenetworkusa.com/>

PSM: 100% Independent PlayStation 2 Magazine is published 13 times a year by The Future Network USA, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005, USA. Periodicals postage paid in Brisbane, CA and at additional mailing offices. Newsstand distribution is handled by Curtis Circulation Co. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement #40043631. Returns: 4960-2 Walker Road, Windsor, ON N9A 6J3. Basic subscription rates: one year (13 issues) \$20 U.S., Canada \$34 U.S. (Canadian price includes GST (GST #128220688), foreign \$44 U.S. Prepaid in U.S. funds only. POSTMASTER send changes of address to PSM-100% Independent PS2 & PlayStation Magazine, P.O. Box 5154, Harlan, Ia 51593-0654. Copyright 2004, The Future Network USA. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part is prohibited. The Future Network USA is not affiliated with the companies or products covered in PSM. PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. CPC Int'l Pub Mail # 1195484.



Future Network USA,
150 North Hill Dr., Brisbane, CA 94005
(415) 468-4684
www.futurenetworkusa.com

PRESIDENT	Jonathan Simpson-Bint
VP/CFO	Tom Valentino
VP/GENERAL COUNSEL	Charles Schug
VP/CIRCULATION	Holly Klingel
VP/EDITORIAL DIRECTOR (GAMES)	Matt Firme
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR (GAMES)	Simon Whitcombe
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR (TECHNOLOGY)	Chris Coelho
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR (TECHNOLOGY)	Jon Phillips
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR (MUSIC)	Brad Tolinski
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL SERVICES	Nancy Durlister
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR	Richie Lesovoy

Future Network USA is part of The Future Network PLC

THE FUTURE NETWORK PLC
30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW, ENGLAND.
www.thefuturenetwork.plc.uk

NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN	Roger Parry
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	Greg Ingham
GROUP FINANCE DIRECTOR	John Bowman

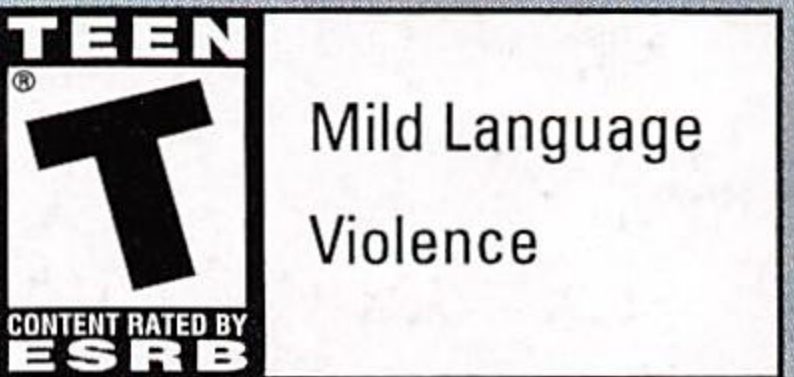
"Each day we make it, we make it better than we did the day before... because we're usually fresher first thing in the morning."

THE SKY IS NO LONGER THE LIMIT



AIRFORCE DELTA STRIKE™

Fly where no jet has gone before. After conquering the skies, break through the earth's atmosphere and take on the universe. With over 130 planes to choose from, 60 missions, a full crew of playable pilots, and Logitech® Flight Force™ flight stick support, AirForce Delta Strike defies the limits.



PlayStation®2



www.konami.com/usa

KONAMI® and Airforce Delta Strike™ are either registered trademarks or trademarks of KONAMI CORPORATION. ©2004 KONAMI & Konami Computer Entertainment Studios. Lockheed Martin Trademarks used under license to Konami Corporation. Produced under license from Boeing Management Company. Produced under a license from Northrop Grumman Systems Corporation. Produced under license from BAE SYSTEMS PLC. Certain Aircraft names and designs are protected by Trade Marks, copyright and other rights owned by BAE SYSTEMS PLC and its partners and are not to be reproduced except as permitted by the license without the prior written consent of BAE SYSTEMS PLC. With support of JGSDF, JMSDF, and JASDF. ©2004 Logitech. All rights reserved. Logitech, the Logitech logo and other Logitech marks are owned by Logitech and may be registered. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

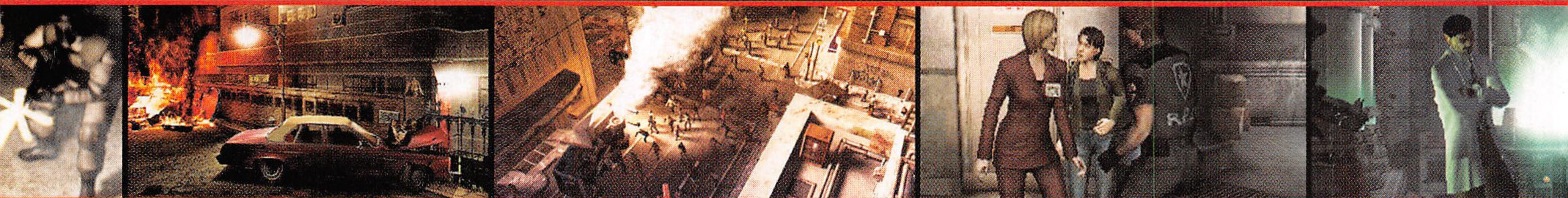
AROUND EVERY CORNER... BEHIND EVERY DOOR... DEEP IN EVERY SHADOW...
TERROR WAITS.

RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK



0 3 - 3 0 - 0 4

Take on the role as one of eight survivors of an outbreak caused by a secret biological weapon. Team up with other survivors - up to 4 in online* mode - to create contagiously addictive play scenarios you'll want to try and relive again and again.



*Broadband play only with network adapter



Blood and Gore
Intense Violence



PlayStation 2

CAPCOM

www.residentevil.com

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003 ©CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2003. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM, the CAPCOM logo and RESIDENT EVIL are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Online play requires internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment